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UNIVERSAL HISTORY,

FROM THE

CREATION OF THE WORLD

TO THE

DECEASE OF GEORGE III., 1820.

BY THE

HON. ALEXANDER FRASER TYTLER, Woodho

AND

REV. EDWARD NARES, DD.

EDITED BY AN AMERICAN.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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PUBLISHERS' ADVERTISEMENT.

It is doubtless true, that "the proper study of mankind is man;" from which consideration the importance of history can scarcely be estimated too highly. Metaphysical, ethical, and physiological inquiries have done much to aid in the prosecution of this study, by ascertaining the laws of mental action, determining the grounds and limits of moral responsibility, and unfolding the mysteries of man's physical nature; but it is history alone which presents, in one collective view, a picture of human life and conduct, in every age and under all possible varieties of circumstances.

The publishers, therefore, can have no doubt that they are rendering an acceptable service to the community, by issuing a cheap and convenient edition of Tytler's much-esteemed work on the Elements of General History. Unquestionably, the most valuable end of historical writing is to impress forcibly on the mind of the reader the important general truths, whether moral, political, or economical, which are naturally suggested by the details of the narrative; and it is believed that in

this respect especially, the following work will be found to possess a very high degree of merit.

It will be perceived that Mr. Tytler has extended his work only to the close of the seventeenth century. To supply this important deficiency, Dr. Nares, Regius Professor of History in the University of Oxford, was induced to prepare an additional volume, nearly on the same plan, and bringing down the subject of General History to the year 1820. This continuation forms the sixth volume of the present edition, and renders the work complete.

The present is published from the last English edition, omitting some few passages which were believed not to be material, and which might be considered objectionable by the American reader; where quotations in other languages occur, they have been rendered into English; and the whole work has been subjected to careful revision. Without farther remark, it is respectfully submitted to the public.

H. & B.

New-York, Sept., 1839.

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UNIVERSAL HISTORY.

BOOK THE FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

Various plans of historical prelections—Chronological method—Method of treating history as subservient only to the science of politics—Plan of the present work—Division by epochs rejected, and why—A predominant nation always the principal object—Ancient history—Greece—Collateral objects, Egypt, Phœnicia, &c.—Views of government, science, arts, &c.—Rome, its collateral and incidental objects of history—Decline of the empire—Gothic nations—Modern history—Saracens—Charlemagne—Laws, &c. of that age—Britain—Continental European kingdoms—Crusades—Russia, Switzerland—Fall of Eastern empire—Moors—Portuguese discoveries—The Reformation—Asia—India—Revolt of the Netherlands—Age of Henry IV. and Elizabeth—Revolution and close of British history—Spain—France—Sweden—Age of Louis XIV.—Charles XII.—Peter the Great—Conclusion—Progress of Science and Literature in Europe.

INGENIOUS men, whose department in the course of education, both in the foreign universities and in our own, was the science of universal history, have followed different methods or plans of historical prelections. In some of the universities of the Continent,

the Epitome of Turselline has been used as a text-book, on which the lectures of the professor were an extended commentary, giving considerable amplitude, and consequently illustration, to what is little more than a dry, though a very perspicuous chronicle of events, from the creation of the world to the end of the seventeenth century. Such were the lectures of Peter Burman, who for many years sustained a high reputation as Professor of History at Utrecht; and such were likewise the prelections of Professor Mackie, in the University of Edinburgh. They were composed in the Latin language, which, down to the middle of the eighteenth century, was the universal vehicle of academical instruction; an institution which, although attended with one important benefit, namely, the support and diffusion of classical learning, has perhaps been wisely laid aside as unfavourable to the ample and copious illustration of a science which cannot easily be given but in the vernacular tongue. The lectures on the Epitome of Turselline, which I have mentioned, were, therefore, as might be expected, little more than a dry narration of facts. If, in order to derive profit from history, nothing more were necessary than that the memory should be stored with all the remarkable events that have occurred from the creation to the present time, properly arranged in the order in which they happened, there could be no better book than the Epitome of Turselline, or the more enlarged *Rationarium* of Petavius. But books of this kind, and illustrations of such authors, when they are nothing more than amplifications of their text, have neither the charms of history nor its utility. As they contain no display of character, nor any spirit of reflection, they are incapable of either exciting the feelings, animating the curiosity, or stimulating the powers of the understanding: and without these qualities, they want even the power of impressing the memory; for where the attention is not vigorously kept awake, either by the excitement of some passion,

or the stimulus of a rational curiosity, exercised in developing the springs and consequences of events, we listen with indifference even to the most orderly and perspicuous narration, and no durable impression is made upon the mind.

Aware of these obvious consequences, and sensible that historical prelections on a plan of this kind were inadequate to the purpose of conveying useful knowledge or improvement, some professors, of acknowledged abilities, have in the instruction of their pupils pursued a method entirely opposite. They have considered history in no other light than as furnishing documents and proofs illustrative of the science of politics and the law of nations. In this view, laying down a regular system of political science, their historical lectures were no other than disquisitions on the several heads or titles of public law, illustrated by examples drawn from ancient and modern history.

By this latter method, it is not to be denied that much useful knowledge may be communicated; and where the professed object is the study of politics, or that instruction which is commonly termed *diplomatic*, it is the proper plan to be pursued. But the study of history, and that of politics, though closely allied to each other, and kindred sciences, are still different branches of mental discipline; the one preparatory and subservient to the other. The student of politics or public law is presumed to have that previous acquaintance with history which it is the object of a course of historical study to communicate; and without such acquaintance his study of politics will be altogether idle and fruitless. A little reflection will suffice to convince us that it is not possible, in the most ample and judicious course of lectures on history, to convey such a knowledge of political economy as may be communicated in a course of prelections on that science; for this plain reason, that in lectures on history, politics cannot be treated as a regular and connected system. But much less is it possible in a course of prelections

on political economy to communicate to the student a sufficient knowledge of history: for in such prelections, history must lose all connexion whatever, and become nothing else than a magazine of facts, taken at random from the annals of all different nations, without regard to time or the order of events, but selected merely as they happen to furnish a convenient illustration. In this way, we see but imperfectly that chain which joins effects to their causes; we lose all view of the gradual progress of manners, the advancement of man from barbarism to civilization, and thence to refinement and corruption; we see nothing of the connexion of states and empires, or the mutual influence which they have upon each other: above all, we lose entirely the best benefit of history, its utility as a school of morals.

As the two plans I have mentioned are in a manner opposite extremes—the one possessing nothing but method, without any reflection; the other a great deal of reflection, but without method—it has been my endeavour, in the following Commentaries on Universal History, to steer a middle course, and by endeavouring to remedy the imperfection of either method, to unite, if possible, the advantages of both.

While, therefore, so much regard is paid to the chronological order of events as is necessary for exhibiting the progress of mankind in society, and communicating just views of the state of the world in all the different ages to which authentic history extends, I shall, in the delineation of the rise and fall of empires, and the revolutions of states, pay more attention to the connexion of *subject* than that of *time*.

In this view, I shall reject entirely the common method of arranging general history according to certain epochs or eras; and this, as I conceive, upon sufficient grounds. The arguments commonly used for this method of arrangement are, 1. The great help it affords to the memory for affixing the chronological dates of remarkable events in the history of any par-

ticular nation; and 2. The assistance which these epochs give to the mind, toward forming distinct ideas of all that is passing at the same period of time through all the different states or kingdoms. The first of these arguments supposes the epochs to be taken chiefly from the history of a single nation; as those of the Bishop of Meaux (M. Bossuet) in his *Discours sur l'Histoire Universelle*, an admirable work of its peculiar kind, and which justly maintains a great reputation. In this luminous epitome, the history of all the different states and kingdoms is arranged according to some remarkable events taken, for the greatest part, from the *History of the Jews*. The second argument supposes the epochs taken from the history of different nations, and to be such remarkable events as had a general influence on mankind, or an effect upon the state of society, over a considerable portion of the globe. Such are the epochs assumed by M. Mehegan in his *Tableau de l'Histoire Universelle;* or those of the *Abbé Millot* in his *Elémens de l'Histoire Générale.*

With regard to the former of these methods, namely that of M. Bossuet, there can be no doubt, that by calling the attention particularly to a few great and striking events in the history of any nation, the precise date of these great events may be very easily impressed upon the memory. They serve as great landmarks, and the mind easily recollects their place and the time of their erection; but this is nearly all the benefit we derive from them. They afford no help towards fixing the dates, or even the order and succession of the intermediate events, many of which may be highly important, and equally deserving of remembrance as the epoch itself. Nay, there is even a probability that the recollection of those epochs may tend to confound the chronological order of the intermediate events, by referring them all to one common era which alone is fixed upon the memory: But, to remember the order and regular succession of events,

is all that is of use or importance in chronological history. It is a matter of small importance to record in the mind the precise date of any remarkable fact as it stands in a table of chronology. If actions and events preserve in the mind their due series and relation to each other, a critical accuracy with respect to the years of the Julian period in which they happened, or the precise Olympiad, is mere useless pedantry.

The history of the Jews is of the greatest importance, as being the venerable basis of the Christian religion. It is therefore deserving of the most profound and attentive study. But the Jews, during the chief periods of their history, were a small and sequestered people, whose annals record only their connexions, or their hostile differences with the petty tribes which surrounded them, or the nations in their immediate neighbourhood. It was therefore injudicious in M. Bossuet, whose object was to exhibit a view of universal history, to make this nation the great and prominent groupe in his painting of the world, to which all the other parts of his extensive picture were subordinate. In the selection of many of his epochs—as for instance the Calling of Abraham, the Promulgation of the Law by Moses, and the Building of Solomon's Temple—he affords us no assistance in the arrangement of events in the great empires of antiquity, with which the Jews in those remote periods had no connexion.

The epochs of Mehegan and of Millot, if considered only as sections or divisions of the subject, are chosen with sufficient propriety. Thus the Roman history is divided by Millot into several epochs, as the Kings—the Consuls—the Tribunes of the People—the Decemvirs—Rome taken by the Gauls—the war with Pyrrhus, &c. Such an arrangement is well adapted to the history of a single nation, and it may afford some little aid to the recollection of intermediate events in the annals of that nation: but where the object is a delineation of general history, or of all that is passing in

the world at the same period of time, this method has not the same advantage. Thus, for example, in the *Tableau de l'Histoire Moderne* of Mehegan, the seventh epoch is Christopher Columbus, 1492, being the date of his discovery of America. The next epoch is the peace of Westphalia, between France, Sweden, and the Empire, in 1648. Supposing these epochs to be easily remembered, it may be asked what help they afford toward the recollection of the dates of any of the intermediate events in this interval of one hundred and fifty-six years or of the order in which they succeeded each other. Yet some of these were among the most remarkable that have occurred in the annals of the world: for instance, the Reformation in Germany and England —the Revolt of the Netherlands, and the Establishment of the Republic of the United Provinces—the Edict of Nantes, giving toleration to the Protestants in France —the expulsion of the Moors from Spain. The recollection that the discovery of America happened in 1492, affords no help to the remembrance of the time of the Reformation, nor tends to fix in the memory whether the expulsion of the Moors preceded or followed the revolution of the Netherlands. The classing of these unconnected events under one general epoch tends only to a confused reference of them all to one date, although, between them, there was almost a century of difference of time.

Besides, in every method of classification, there ought to be a relation between the objects classified, which the mind at once perceives, so that the idea of the one naturally leads to or suggests that of the other. Now such connexion it is evident there cannot be in such an arrangement, where the events happening in a certain period of time over the whole globe, are all referred to one event that happened in the first year of that period, in one particular nation.

The division of Universal History into epochs, goes upon this idea, that a comprehensive picture is to be presented to the view of all the remarkable events

and actions which were going forward upon the face of the earth at the same period of time. Now, a picture of this kind, if equal justice is done to every part of it, would present a most confused and uninstructive composition. In order to preserve the strict chronological order, many of the most important public events which are progressive, and of considerable duration, must be interrupted, almost in their commencement, or in the middle of their progress; and the attention carried off to an infinite variety of different objects and scenes, totally unconnected with each other. Thus, M. Bossuet makes no scruple to transport his reader in a single sentence from Jerusalem to Lacedæmon; from the atrocities of Jehu in exterminating the royal house of Judah, and the criminal usurpation of Athaliah, to the foundation of the Spartan republic, and the politic plans of Lycurgus; and, with equal impropriety, he hurries back the reader in the next sentence to the conclusion of the history of Athaliah, the punishment of her crimes, and the restoration of Joas, king of Judah, to the throne of his ancestors.

But what are the advantages of this strict chronological order, that we must sacrifice so much to it? Order is beautiful, but it is no otherwise so than as subservient to utility, and a whimsical order confounds instead of elucidating. We certainly make a bad exchange, if we lose all ideas of a connected history of any single nation, and all the important lessons which arise from remarking the progress of events, and the chain which links them with their causes, for the sake of a forced association of events happening in distant nations, which have no other connexion than that of time.

I shall now briefly lay down the plan which I propose to follow in these commentaries on Universal History.

When the world is viewed at any period, either of ancient or of modern history, we generally observe one Nation or Empire predominant, to whom all the rest

bear, as it were, an underpart, and to whose history we find, in general, that the principal events in other nations may be referred from some natural connexion.

This predominant nation I propose to exhibit to view as the principal object, whose history, as being in reality the most important, is therefore to be more fully delineated; while the rest, as subordinate, are brought into view only when they come to have an obvious connexion with the principal. The antecedent history of such subordinate nations will then be traced in a short retrospect of their own annals. Such collateral views, which figure only as episodes, I shall endeavour so to regulate, as that they shall have no hurtful effect in violating the unity of the principal piece.

For the earliest periods of the history of the world, we have no records of equal authority with the Sacred Scriptures. They ascend to a period antecedent to the formation of regular states or communities, they are long prior to the authentic annals of the profane nations,* and they are, therefore, our only lights on those distant and dark ages of the infancy of the human race.

Among the profane nations of antiquity, that which first makes a remarkable figure, and whose history at the same time has a claim to be regarded as authentic, is the states of Greece. They therefore demand

* Moses conducted the Israelites out of Egypt 1491 years before the birth of Christ, according to the Chronology of Usher. Sanchoniatho, supposed the most ancient of the profane writers, lived several years after the Trojan war (B. C. 1184); and the fragments which pass under his name are of the most doubtful authority. They were compiled, as Philo of Biblos informs us, from certain ancient Ammonian records, which, amid a great mass of fabulous and allegorical matter, contained, as was supposed, some historical facts, which Sanchoniatho has extracted. Homer lived, as is believed, about a century later than Sanchoniatho. Cadmus of Miletus, the first prose historian among the profane writers, flourished under Cyrus, about 540 years before Christ.

a peculiar attention, and it is of importance to trace their history to its origin. But the Greeks were indebted for the greatest part of their knowledge to the Egyptians and Phœnicians. These, therefore, as relative to the leading nation, demand a portion of our attention, and naturally precede, or pave the way to, the history of the Greeks. For a similar reason, the Assyrians, a rival nation, conquered by the Egyptians at one time, and conquerors of them afterward in their turn, (though their early history is extremely dark and uncertain,) require likewise a share in our observations.

The Greeks then come to fill up the whole of the picture, and we endeavour to present an accurate delineation of their independent states, the singular constitution of the two great republics of Sparta and Athens, and the outlines of their history, down to the period of the Persian war, commenced by Darius the son of Hystaspes, and prosecuted under his successors Xerxes and Artaxerxes. This connexion naturally induces a short retrospect to the preceding periods of the Persian history; the rise of that monarchy, the nature of its government, the manners of the people, and the singular religion of the ancient Persians, which subsisted without much adulteration for some thousands of years, and is still kept alive among a particular sect at this day.

The conclusion of the Persian war brings us back to the internal history of the states of Greece. We observe the subjection of Athens to the ambitious Pericles, and the seeds sown of the decline of that illustrious republic. The divisions of Greece engage our attention; the war of Peloponnesus; the corruption of the Spartan constitution introduced by Lysander; the glory of Thebes under Pelopidas and Epaminondas. We consider now the ambitious schemes of Philip of Macedon, the renewal of the war with Persia, and the immense conquests of Alexander the Great. We see, in fine, the total corruption of the Greeks; the extinc-

tion of all public virtue; the last feeble remains of patriotism in the union of the Achæan states; and the final reduction and submission of Greece to the arms of the Romans.

The history of this illustrious people, the Greeks, furnishes a most ample field of reflection. The policy and constitution of the different states, particularly the two great and rival republics of Athens and Lacedæmon, demand our attention, as singularly illustrative of ancient manners, and the wonderful effects of habit and discipline on the nature of man. The causes which contributed to the rise and decline of those commonwealths are pregnant with political instruction. The change which the national character of the Greeks in general underwent, is a striking circumstance in the history of human nature, and will illustrate the influence of morals on political prosperity. The literary genius of this people, their progress in philosophy, their eminence in the fine arts—in all of which departments they became the models of imitation and the instructers of the ancient world,—these subjects furnishing much matter of useful speculation, will be treated in separate short disquisitions at the conclusion of the historical detail.

Hitherto the leading object of attention is the history of Greece, to which, as may be observed, may be referred, by a natural connexion, that of all the other nations whose history is in those periods deserving of our acquaintance.

The conquest of Greece by the Romans entitles this latter nation to rank as the principal object in the subsequent delineation of ancient history. Without regard to the offence against chronology, we now return back above four hundred years, to observe the origin and rise of this remarkable people. We contemplate them in their infancy; we observe the military character which they derived from their incessant wars with the neighbouring states of Italy; the nature of their government and internal policy under the kings;

the easy revolution effected by the substitution of the consular for the regal dignity, without any substantial change in the constitution. We next remark the causes of the subsequent change; the people uniting themselves to resist the tyranny and oppression of the patrician order; the advantages they gain by the creation of the popular magistrates; the continual encroachments they make on the powers and privileges of the higher order, till they obtain an equal capacity of enjoying all the offices and dignities of the commonwealth.

We now view the gradual extension of the Roman arms; the conquest of all Italy; the origin of the wars with foreign nations; the rise with the Punic wars, which opens a collateral view of the history of Carthage and of Sicily; we trace the success of the Roman arms in Asia, Macedonia and Greece, the opulence of the Republic, from her conquests; and the corruption of her manners. In fine, we behold the extinction of patriotism; the endless discords between the orders, loosening all the bands of public virtue; the progress of faction and inordinate ambition, terminating in the civil wars and ruin of the commonwealth.

At this remarkable period, which naturally allows a pause in the historical detail, I shall devote some time to the examination of those particulars which are characteristic of the genius and national spirit of the Romans; their system of education; their laws; their literary character; their art of war; their knowledge in the arts and sciences; their public and private manners; and their predominant tastes and passions. I shall close the remarks on the Roman history during the commonwealth, with some political reflections naturally arising from the subject, and illustrated by examples drawn both from that history, and from the preceding account of the states of Greece.

We then resume the outlines of the Roman history under the emperors. We observe the specious policy under which they disguise an absolute authority, till it

is no longer necessary to keep on the mask. We remark the decline of the ambitious character of the Romans, and their easy submission to the entire loss of civil liberty; the progress of corruption; the venality of the imperial dignity; the mischievous though necessary policy of the emperors, who, to secure their own power, industriously abased the military spirit of the people; the effect of this ruinous policy in inviting the barbarous nations to attack the frontiers of those extensive dominions, which were now a languid and unwieldy body without internal vigour; the weakness of the empire still further increased by its partition under Diocletian, and subdivision under his successors; the triumph of Christianity, and the extinction of paganism in the age of Theodosius.

We mark now the progress of the barbarian nations, who attack the provinces on every quarter, till the Western empire becomes entirely their prey; Africa seized by the Vandals, Spain by the Visigoths, Gaul by the Franks, Britain by the Saxons; Rome and Italy itself by the Herulians, and afterward by the Ostrogoths. We shall then observe, as the last flashes of an expiring lamp, a short but vigorous exertion from the East, by the generals of Justinian; the temporary recovery of Italy; and its final reduction by the Lombards.

At this period, of the fall of the Western empire, we are naturally invited to enter into some short inquiries regarding the manners, the genius, the laws, and government of the Gothic nations; and the distinguishing characteristics of those northern invaders, both before and after their establishment in the provinces of the empire.

Thus, Ancient History will admit of a perspicuous delineation, by making our principal object of attention the predominant states of Greece and Rome, and incidentally touching on the most remarkable parts of the history of the subordinate nations of antiquity, when connected with, or relative to the principal object.

In the delineation of Modern History, a similar plan will be pursued. The leading objects will be more various, and will more frequently change their place: a nation at one time the principal, may become for a while subordinate, and afterward reassume its rank as principal; but uniformity of design will still characterize this moving picture; the attention will always be directed to the history of a predominant people; and other nations will be only incidentally noticed, when there is a natural connexion with the principal object.

After the fall of the Western Empire, the nation which first distinguishes itself by its conquests, and the splendor of its dominion, is that of the Saracens. The progress of the arms and of the religion of Mahomet, the rise and extent of the empire of the califs, are singular and interesting objects of attention, The Franks, though settled in the Gauls before this period, do not attract our notice till afterward—when the foundation of the new empire of the west by Charlemagne naturally engages us to look back to the origin of their monarchy. Thus we have briefly before us, in one connected view, the progress of this remarkable people from their infancy under Clovis, to their highest elevation under Charlemagne; and thence to the reduction and demembration of their dominions under his weak posterity.

The age of Charlemagne furnishes some interesting matters of inquiry with regard to laws, literature, manners and government; and we shall endeavour to trace the origin of that remarkable policy, the source (as has been justly said) both of the stability and of the disorders of the kingdoms of Europe,—the feudal system.

The collateral objects of attention during this period are, the still venerable remains of the Roman empire in the East; the beginning of the conquests and establishments of the Normans; the foundation and progress of the temporal dominion of the church of Rome; the separation of the Greek and Latin churches; the

affairs of Italy, and the conquest of Spain by the Saracens.

We now direct our attention for the first time to the history of Britain, postponed to this period, that we may consider it in one connected view, from its rudest stage to the end of the Anglo-Saxon Government.

As the history of our own country is of more importance to us than that of any other, the British history, as often as it is resumed, will be treated with greater amplitude than the limits of our plan allow to other nations; and while we note the progress of manners, literature, and the arts, it shall be our endeavour, without prejudice, to mark those circumstances which indicate the progress of the constitution, its successive changes, and its advancement to that system of equal liberty under which we have the happiness of living. We shall see in the Saxon *Wittenagemot* the rude model of a parliament; and in the institutions of the English Alfred, we shall admire, in an age of barbarism, the genius of a great politician and legislator.

While the history of Britain to the conquest is the primary object of attention, a collateral view is taken of the state of the continental kingdoms of Europe. France, under the first sovereigns of the Capetian race, presents us with very little that is worthy of observation. The Normans carry their arms into Italy, and achieve the conquest of Sicily; while the maritime states of Venice and Genoa, rising into consequence, become the commercial agents of most of the European kingdoms. The dissensions between the German emperors and the popes, and the gradual increase of the temporal authority of the see of Rome, are not unworthy of a particular attention.

The British history is again resumed as a principal object; and we pursue its great outlines from the Norman conquest to the death of King John. In the tyranny of William the conqueror, and in the exorbitant weight of the crown during the reigns immediately succeeding, we shall observe the causes of that spirit of

union among the people, in their efforts to resist it, which procured for them those valuable charters, the foundation of our civil liberty. Under the reign of the second Henry, we shall observe a most important accession of territory to the English crown, in the acquisition of the ancient and early civilized kingdom of Ireland.

At this period, the whole of the nations of Europe, as if actuated by one spirit, join in the Crusades, a series of fatal and desperate enterprises, but which form an important object of attention, from their effects in the formation of new kingdoms, new political arrangements, and a new system of manners. We shall trace with some care those effects in the changes of territorial property in the feudal governments—in the immunities acquired by towns and boroughs, which had hitherto been tied down by a species of vassalage to the nobles—and in the aggrandizement of the maritime cities. The moral as well as the political effects of those enterprises must be particularly noticed; and we shall find a subject of entertaining disquisition in tracing the origin of chivalry and its consequences in the introduction of romantic fiction.

A short connected sketch of the European kingdoms after the crusades naturally follows; in which a variety of interesting subjects solicit our attention:—the rise of the House of Austria; the decline of the feudal government in France by the introduction of the *Third Estate* to the National assemblies; the establishment of the Swiss republics; the disorders in the popedom; and the memorable transactions in the council of Constance.

These shortly considered, Britain again resumes her place as the leading object of attention. We remark the progress of the English constitution under Henry III., when the deputies of the boroughs were first admitted into parliament, the real date of the origin of the House of Commons; the strengthening of the liberties of the people under Edward I., whose military

enterprises, the conquest of Wales, and the temporary reduction of Scotland, lead us, by an easy connexion, to the history of the latter kingdom. We shall here behold the many noble and successful struggles made by that ancient nation for her freedom and independence, against the power of the three first Edwards. We consider the claim of right preferred by Edward III. to the crown of France equally ill founded, but more ably and gloriously sustained; and the multiplied triumphs of the arms of England, till the kingdom of France itself is won by Henry V.

We now turn our attention to the East, to remark an interesting spectacle: the progress of the Ottoman arms retarded for awhile by the conquests of Tamerlane and Scanderberg; but prosecuted under Mahomet the Great, to the total extinction of the Greek or Constantinopolitan empire. The manners, laws, and government of the Turks, merit a share of our consideration.

Returning westward, we see France in this age emancipating herself from the feudal bondage; and the consequences of the pretensions made by her sovereigns to a part of Italy. These pretensions, traversed by Ferdinand of Spain, naturally call our attention to that quarter, where a most important political change had been operated in the union of the sovereignties of Arragon and Castile, and the fall of the Moorish kingdom of Granada.

Returning to Britain, while England is embroiled with the civil wars of York and Lancaster, we pursue the great outlines of her history down to the reign of Henry VIII., and the contemporary history of Scotland, during the reign of the five Jameses. At this period, presenting a short delineation of the ancient constitution of the Scottish government, I shall endeavour to point out those political principles which regulated the conduct of the Scots with respect to their neighbours of England, and to foreign nations.

The close of the fifteenth century is a most impor-

tant era in modern history. The signal improvement of navigation by the Portuguese, who opened to Europe the commerce of the Indies—the rapid advancement of literature from the discovery of the art of printing—and the revival of the fine arts—present a most extensive field of pleasing and instructive speculation. We shall mark the effect of the Portuguese discoveries in awakening the spirit of enterprise, together with the industry, of all the European nations; and shall here introduce a progressive account of the *commerce of Europe* down to this era, when it was vigorously and extensively promoted. We shall in like manner exhibit a view of the progress of *European literature* through the preceding ages of comparative barbarism, to the splendour it attained at this remarkable period. The consideration of the progress of *the fine arts* we postpone to the succeeding age of Leo X., when they attained to their utmost perfection.

After a short survey of the northern states of Europe, which is necessary for preserving the unity of the picture, the capital object of attention is the aggrandizement of the House of Austria, under Charles V.; intimately connected with the history of France under Francis I.; and incidentally with that of England, under Henry VIII.: a period meriting particular and attentive consideration from two events of the utmost moral and political importance—the reformation of religion in Germany and England, and the discovery of America. On this period is likewise thrown an additional lustre from the splendour of the fine arts in Italy.

After bestowing on these varied and interesting subjects the attention which they merit, the state of Asia, which, from the period of ancient history, had attracted occasionally only a slight degree of notice, becomes for a while the principal object of attention. The empire of India, highly importantin modern times, the singularity of its political arrangements and national character, which have suffered no change since the age of Alexander; the political and moral history of the Persians;

the revolutions operated on that immense continent by the Tartar successors of Gengiskan, are all worthy of a particular share of our consideration. The establishment of the Tartar princes on the throne of China calls our attention to that extraordinary monarchy, which, till this period, was almost unknown to the nations of Europe. We shall here examine at some length the ground of these opinions which it has of late become customary to entertain, with regard to the prodigious antiquity of this people; their wonderful attainments in the arts and sciences; their alleged early acquaintance with the chief modern discoveries of the Europeans; and the boasted excellence of their laws, their government, and political economy.

Returning to Europe, the object which, in the close of the sixteenth century, first demands our notice, is the reign of Philip II. of Spain, distinguished by the revolt of the Netherlands, and the establishment of the republic of Holland. The constitution and government of the United Provinces merit here a brief delineation.

France now takes her turn, and holds the principal place in the picture during the turbulent and distracted reign of Francis II., Charles IX., and Henry III., till we witness her happiness, tranquillity, and splendour under the great Henry IV.

The transition thence is easy to the era of England's grandeur and prosperity under his contemporary Elizabeth. The affairs of Scotland, too much connected at this period with those of the sister country, call our attention to the interesting reign of Mary, Queen of Scots, and the progress of the Reformation in that kingdom. Hence we pursue, without interruption, the outlines of the English history during the reigns of James I., of Charles I.—during the Commonwealth—and the subsequent reigns of Charles II. and James II. —to the important period of the Revolution.

Here, after a connected sketch of the progress of the English constitution, and a particular examination of

its nature at this great era, when it became fixed and determined, we close our delineation of the British History.

But the affairs of the continent of Europe, at this time in a most active and progressive state, admit not of the same termination. We look back to France, which, under the splendid and politic administration of Richelieu, yet embroiled with faction and civil war, presents a striking object of attention. We remark the declension of the power of Spain under Philip III. and Philip IV., and Portugal in the latter reign shaking off its yoke, and establishing an independent monarchy. We see the Austrian power attacked by the Swedes under Gustavus Adolphus, declining under Ferdinand II. and III., and humiliated by the peace of Westphalia, in which the French and Swedes gave laws to the empire; a treaty, however, salutary in the main, as settling the ruinous quarrels between her contending princes.

We see France, in the minority of Louis XIV., harassed with the disorders of the Fronde, originating in the unpopular administration of Mazarin. After his death, we remark the genius of Louis displaying itself in a variety of splendid enterprises; his views seconded by the abilities of his ministers and generals; while the excellent order of the finances enables him easily to execute the most important designs. The opening to the succession of the Spanish crown, while it increases for a while the glory of his arms, leads finally to the mortifying reverse of his fortune; and we behold the latter years of this memorable reign as unfortunate, as the former had been marked with splendour and success.

Meantime, two rival powers of high celebrity call our attention to a variety of interesting scenes in the North of Europe. Russia, till now in absolute barbarism, becomes at once, by the abilities of a single man, a powerful and polished empire. Sweden, under the minority of its prince, ready to be torn in pieces

by the powers of Russia, Denmark, and Poland, becomes, in a single campaign, the terror of the surrounding kingdoms. We see this prince, a second Alexander, in a career as short and as impetuous, carry those heroic virtues which he possessed to an extreme as dangerous as their opposite vices.

At this period we close our delineation of modern history, with a view of the progress of the sciences, and of the state of literature in Europe, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Such is the plan to be pursued in the following Commentaries. Of the merits or defects of the arrangement, those who possess an extensive knowledge of history, and who have prosecuted that study to its best purposes—instruction in political and moral science—are best fitted to form a judgment. To the general reader, I trust it will at least be found to possess the qualities of simplicity and perspicuity.

With regard to chronology, it is necessary to remark that, without entering into any discussion of the merits of the different systems, I have chosen to follow the chronology of Archbishop Usher, or that which is founded on the Hebrew text of the Sacred Writings; and this for the sole reason, that it has been most generally adopted by the writers both of our own and of foreign nations.

A chronological table is subjoined to the work, because a frequent reference to dates gives a disagreeable interruption to the chain of narration; and the succession of events in the mere order of time, as well as the contemporary history of the different nations of the world, is better understood from a single glance on the page of a table of chronology than from repeated notices in the course of the narrative.

CHAPTER II.

Earliest Ages of the World—Early History of Assyria—Of Egypt—Invasion of the Shepherd Kings.

PROFANE History, agreeing with sacred, joins in the establishment of this great truth, which reason itself, independently of authority, must have clearly evinced, that this visible system of things which we term the Universe has had its commencement.

All accounts of the early history of single nations trace them back to a state of rudeness and barbarism, which argues a new and an infant establishment; and we must conclude that to be true with respect to the whole, which we find to be true with respect to all its parts. But to delineate the characters of this early state of society, to trace distinctly the steps by which population extended over the whole surface of the habitable globe; the separation of mankind into tribes and nations; the causes which led to the formation of the first kingdoms, and the precise times when they were formed—are matters of inquiry for which neither sacred nor profane history affords us that amplitude of information which is necessary for giving clear and positive ideas. But while we travel through those remote periods of the history of an infant world, making the best of those lights we can procure, we have the comfort of thinking that, in proportion as man advances from barbarism to civilization, in proportion as his history becomes useful or instructive, its certainty increases, and its materials become more authentic and more abundant.

The Hebrew text of the sacred writings informs us that a period of 1656 years elapsed between the Creation of the world and the Deluge. The Books of Moses contain a brief detail of the transactions of that period, and are the only records of those ages. With regard to the state of the antediluvian world, specula-

tive men have exercised their fancy in numberless conjectures. Various notions have been formed concerning the population of this globe and its physical appearance—probable causes conjectured of the longevity of its inhabitants—inquiries into the state of the arts—and theories framed of that process of nature by which the Almighty being is supposed to have brought about the universal deluge. These are, no doubt, ingenious and interesting speculations; but they can scarcely be said to fall within the department of history, of which it is the province to instruct by ascertained facts, and not to amuse by fanciful theories. To us, who wish to derive from history a knowledge of human nature as it is at present, and to study those important lessons which it furnishes for the conduct of life, it is of little consequence to know what was either the physical or the political state of the world before the deluge. As so entire a change must have been operated by that event on the face of nature, as totally to extinguish all traces of antediluvian knowledge, and to reduce the world anew to a state of infancy, we are well assured that the manners, customs, arts, sciences, and political arrangements of the antediluvian ages could have had little or no influence on those which succeeded them.

Of the times immediately following the deluge, we have no other original history than that contained in the books of Moses. The sacred writings inform us, that the family of Noah established themselves in the plain of Shinaar, where they built the tower of Babel, and that the confusion of their language caused their dispersion into the different regions of the earth.

A view of the physical surface of this habitable globe, parted, as we observe it is, by those great natural boundaries, the chains of mountains, and the rivers which intersect it, affords the most convincing evidence that the earth was intended by the great Architect of all things to be peopled by various tribes and nations who should be perpetually separated from each

other by those eternal barriers, which will ever prevent empires and states from permanently exceeding a just bound of territory. Without those natural boundaries, the limits of kingdoms must have been continually fluctuating; and perpetual discord must have embroiled the universe. An ambitious potentate may, with the accidental concurrence of favorable circumstances, enlarge for a time the limits of an empire, beyond this just proportion; but the *force* of government and laws is weakened as its sphere is extended: and the encroachment being clearly marked and defined by those natural barriers, the lost territory will scarcely fail to be regained; and the revolution of a few years will again bring empires and kingdoms to their ancient limits.

The physical nature with respect to soil and climate of the different countries into which the inhabitants of the earth were dispersed, must, in most cases, have determined their manner of life, and influenced the condition of society. If, before their dispersion, mankind had made any progress in the arts, as, after that event, many of those wandering tribes must, from the nature of the countries which they occupied, have betaken themselves to the pastoral life, while others subsisted solely as hunters, the arts among them being totally neglected from finding no call to their exercise, it is no wonder that we observe, soon after the deluge, the greater part of the nations in a state of barbarism, or little advanced beyond that condition. Such of the original tribes, however, as without any distant migration, had fixed themselves in the vicinity of their primeval seats, that is, on the borders of the Mediterranean Sea, very naturally retained and cultivated those arts of which their progenitors had been in possession. Thus, Nimrod, the grandson of Ham, the son of Noah, about 150 years after the deluge, is said to have founded Babylon; and Assur, the grandson of Noah, to have built the city of Nineveh, which became the capital of the Assyrian empire: but the Mo-

saic writings make no more mention of Nimrod, or of Assur, or any of their successors.

Profane historians, on the other hand, make Belus the founder of Babylon, who is therefore supposed to have been the same with Nimrod. His son, Ninus, to whom those historians attribute the foundation of Nineveh, is said to have been the conqueror of India and Bactriana; and under him and his queen Semiramis, who reigned alone after his death, the Assyrian empire is supposed to have attained a very high degree of splendour. The magnificence of Babylon and of Nineveh would indeed give immense ideas of the wealth and power of Ninus and Semiramis; but it is scarcely credible that Nineveh, in the time of its founder, and Babylon, under the son of its founder, should either have been splendid in themselves, or the empire very considerable to which they belonged. It is the conjecture of other historians, that Nineveh and Babylon, till the year 590 after the deluge, were separate monarchies; that Ninus, who reigned at Nineveh, made the conquest of Babylon; and that the date of the Assyrian empire, properly so called, is to be fixed only at the union of these kingdoms. But these are discussions of more curiosity than importance, and we shall not enter into them.

From the death of Ninias, the son of Ninus, down to the revolt of the Medes, under Sardanapalus, there is an interval of 800 years, in which there is an absolute void in the history of Assyria and Babylon. The names, indeed, of the supposed sovereigns during that period are preserved, but there are no traces of historical events. Even the catalogue of the names of those princes appears suspicious, from their being taken from the Greek and Persian languages; as, for example, Lamprides, Dercylus, Amyntas, Xerxes, Aramitres. This, however, is no conclusive evidence of forgery; since we know how common has been the practice of authors of translating proper names (such, at least, as have characteristic significations) from their original,

into the language used by the historian.* By those who support the authenticity of this catalogue of the Assyrian and Babylonish monarchs, the obscurity of their reigns has been attributed to the indolence, effeminacy, and debauchery in which they were plunged. This, however, is a weak supposition. It is against all moral probability that a great empire should have subsisted without a revolution for 800 years, under a series of dissolute, weak and effeminate monarchs. That character in the prince is the parent of seditions, conspiracies, and rebellion among the people, instead of a quiet and peaceable subjection; and, accordingly, we find that the kingdom of Babylon, till then united with Assyria, shook off its yoke under the weak and dissolute Sardanapalus. If we are at all to form a conjecture of the state of the Assyrian empire during this great chasm in its history, it must be a very different one; namely, that it was governed by a series of wise, virtuous, and pacific princes, the uniform tenor of whose reigns have furnished no striking events for the mouth of tradition, or for the pen of the historian.

Besides the Assyrians, the Egyptians are the only nation of whom profane history, at this early period, makes any mention: but the commencement of their history is as uncertain as that of the Assyrians. Menes is supposed the first king in Egypt, and according to the most probable theory, which connects the sacred with the profane history, he is believed to be the same person with Misraim, the grandson of Noah, whom

* Among the modern writers, Buchanan and the President De Thou have signally impaired the utility of their excellent histories by this most injudicious practice. It is true that the French and English terminations of proper names accord extremely ill with the harmonious flow of classical Latin composition; but this defect might in most cases be remedied by simply giving those names a Latin termination. The disguise is impenetrable where the word itself is attempted to be translated, as *Plexippus* (Harry Hotspur), *Sophocardius* (Wishart), *Megalocephalus* (Malcolm Canmore), &c.

there are likewise very probable grounds for supposing to be the deified personage whom the Egyptians venerated under the names of Oziris. Oziris is described as the inventor of arts, and the civilizer of a great part of the world. He raised, as we are told, a prodigious army, and overran Ethiopia, Arabia, and great part of India; appeared in all the nations of Asia, and, crossing the Hellespont, continued his progress through a great part of Europe. This extraordinary man disseminated the arts, built cities, and was universally revered as a god. Returning to Egypt, he was assassinated by his brother Typhon; but his death was revenged by his sister Isis, and his apotheosis solemnly performed.

After Menes or Oziris, Egypt was governed by a succession of illustrious men whom succeeding ages have characterized as gods and demigods. The country was then divided into four dynasties—Thebes, Thin, Memphis, and Tanis; the inhabitants of which had made great progress in civilization and the culture of the arts, when they were thrown back into a state of comparative barbarism by the invasion of the shepherd kings, a body of marauders from Ethiopia, who made a partition of the whole country, each of the chiefs governing independently a separate province.* The dominion of these shepherd kings is said to have subsisted for 259 years, when they were expelled by Aonosis, a prince of Upper Egypt, and forced to retreat with their adherents into the neighboring countries of Syria and Palestine. What space elapsed from the termination put to their dominion by the famous Sesostris, is absolutely uncertain; nor with re-

* Mr. Bruce, in his History of Abyssinia, has made it extremely probable that the shepherds who invaded Egypt were a tribe from the Abyssinian coast of the Red Sea, called *Beni*, who had become acquainted with Egypt in the way of commerce, as the carriers of the Cashile merchants, and observing the weakness of the country, while they envied its wealth, subdued it, after three several invasions.—*See Bruce's Travels.*

gard to this prince, can we give any credit to those most hyperbolical accounts either of his foreign conquests or his domestic policy, and the wonderful economy of his government. Yet though we cannot easily believe with Herodotus that the sovereign of a country which is said to have contained 27,000,000 of inhabitants could effect an equal partition of all the lands of the empire among his subjects; nor with Diodorus Siculus, that the same prince, with an army of 600,000 men, and 27,000 armed chariots traversed and subdued the whole continent of Asia and a great part of Europe, we may at least hold it probable that the Egyptians had a sovereign of the name of Sesostris, who distinguished himself in those rude ages, both as a conqueror and a legislator. The reverence paid to the name of Sesostris by the ancient Egyptians, and the honours done to his memory as a great benefactor of his country, sufficiently prove the reality of such a personage.

CHAPTER III.

On the nature of the first Governments, and on the Manners and Customs, Laws, Arts, and Sciences of the early Nations.

Amid the scanty materials of authentic history in those early ages of the world, it may afford matter of amusing as well as useful speculation, to consider what must have been the nature of the first governments; and to endeavour to discover the genius of the ancient nations from those traces of laws, manners and customs, arts and sciences, which are preserved to us, with the aid of such conjectures as are founded on a fair and just analogy.

The rudest period of society is that in which the

patriarchal government takes place, or where there is no other subordination known than that of the members of a family to their head or parent. But this simple form of society can be of no long duration. Dissensions arising, and the more powerful families subduing the weaker, combinations would naturally be formed to resist the encroachments of a covetous or ambitious patriarch; and a union of interests would take place as the benefits of such a compact would be felt alike for defence or for refuge, for conquest or for domestic security. But the authority of the patriarch, thus weakened in some respects by the control of a common chief, would not necessarily be extinguished or destroyed. The family would become members of a tribe or clan; bnt the father would still retain his authority over his children and his servants: the number of these would render his power still considerable; and the chief or king would always find it his interest to pay such deference to the principal patriarchs of his tribe, as to consult with them in all affairs which regarded the common good.

We may, therefore, fairly presume that a limited monarchy was the earliest form of regular government among the ancient nations. The scriptures, as well as the profane historians, bear evidence to this fact. A republic is an idea too refined and too complex for a rude people to form: and despotic monarchies arise only after extensive conquests, and a great enlargement of empire.

The first monarchies must have been very weak, and their territory extremely limited. The sovereigns would be little desirous of extending them by conquest while the land supplied the wants of its inhabitants. Security is the first idea: ambition is long posterior, and takes place only when population is abundant, and increasing luxury demands increased supplies. In forming our notions of the power of the first monarchies we are apt to be misled by the word *king*, which, in modern language and according to

modern ideas, is connected with an extent of territory and a proportional power. Yet the Jewish annals, the most ancient of all histories, ought to have corrected such erroneous notions. Chedorlaomer, the first who is recorded to have attempted a military expedition, was, together with three kings, his allies, defeated by the patriarch Abraham with three hundred and eighteen men of his own household. Nimrod is supposed to have been a mighty monarch. All that Moses says of him is, that he was a *mighty hunter*. The very idea of a hunter excludes the supposition of a powerful sovereign, or a great empire. It supposes, what was certainly the case, that the earth was covered with forests, the receptacles of wild beasts, and consequently very thinly inhabited. A hunter-chief in his excursions, might, no doubt, range over the extent of modern kingdoms and empires; but what was his power, and who were his subjects? The control, and even that a very limited authority, over a few hordes or families who pitched their tents in a narrow valley in the midst of deserts, or occupied, perhaps, but a portion of that valley. A single town, or more properly an encampment, was then termed *a kingdom*. There were five kings in the vale of Sodom. Joshua defeated thirty-one kings. Adonibezek, who died a little after the time of Joshua, boasted that he had defeated threescore and ten kings, and mutilating their hands and feet, had made them gather their meat under his table.

In those early periods the regal dignity was, in all probability, attained by the personal talents of individuals, on account of eminent services performed to their country; and, of course, the office of king was at first elective.* The progress is natural from thence to

* The account which Herodotus gives of the election of the first king of the Medes is indicative of the rise of monarchy in other rude nations. The Medes, after their revolt from the Assyrians, were subject to all the disorders and miseries of anarchy. An able man, of the name of Dejoces, was ex-

an hereditary monarchy. The transmission of the throne to the heir of the last sovereign originated from experience of the mischiefs arising from frequent elections, and the disorders occasioned by ambitious men aspiring to that dignity. The dread of these evils, combining with the natural feeling of regard which a people entertains for the family of the man under whose government they have been happy—the presumption that his offspring may inherit from nature, example, or education, the virtues of their father; all these circumstances would co-operate to render the kingly office hereditary: and such, therefore, we find from ancient history was the constitution of the earliest governments.

The first ideas of conquest must have proceeded from a people in the state of shepherds, like the wandering Tartars and Scythians, who necessarily changing their territory in quest of new pastures, would often make incursions upon the fixed dominions of the cultivated countries. And such was the condition of those marauders from Ethiopia, or perhaps Abyssinia, whom we have already mentioned under the name of *shepherd kings*, as having been the conquerors of Egypt. But monarchies, or empires, thus founded by the invasion of a rude and wandering people, could seldom be stable or permanent. An extensive monarchy is, therefore, a rare phenomenon not to be looked for in such a state of society. It presupposes a considerable degree of intellectual refinement, general habits of order and subordination, and a regular system of laws, all which is the work of ages; nor will political regulations

tremely successful in quieting these disorders, and by degrees attained to much influence and respect among his countrymen. Oppressed with the fatigues with which this voluntary duty was attended, Dejoces betook himself to retirement. The Medes now felt the want of his authority, and, in a general assembly of the people, it was unanimously resolved to invest their benefactor with the sovereign power.--*Herod.* b. l., c. 97, *et seq.*

meet with any respect or obedience unless among a people thus refined and enlightened—a state of society far advanced beyond the rude condition of shepherds or hunters.

Advancement from barbarism to civilization is a very slow and gradual process, because every step in that process is the result of necessity after the experience of an error, or the strong feeling of a want. These experiences, frequently repeated, show at length the necessity of certain rules and customs to be followed by the general consent of all; and these rules become in time positive enactments or laws, enforced by certain penalties, which are various in their kind and in their degree, according to the state of society at the time of their formation. Some political writers have supposed that during the infancy of society penal laws must have been exceedingly mild, from the want of authority in government to enforce such as are severe. On the other hand, it may perhaps appear a more natural conjecture that rude and ferocious manners would incite to rigorous and cruel punishments, and that the ruder and more untractable the people, the severer must be the laws necessary to restrain them. The strength of the violent passions which prompt to crimes in a rude state of society is to be curbed only by the severest bodily inflictions. Punishments which operate by shame, or by restraints upon liberty, would have little effect in a state of this kind. But the fact does not rest upon conjecture. History actually informs us that the most ancient penal laws were remarkably severe. By the Mosaic law, the crimes of homicide, adultery, incest, and rape were punished with burning, stoning, and the most cruel kinds of death. Diodorus Siculus notices the same spirit of severity in the ancient laws of the Egyptians. The first laws of the Athenians, framed by Draco, are proverbial for their cruelty. The earliest laws of the Roman state, at least those of the Twelve Tables, are full of the most severe punishments, and capital

inflictions for almost every offence. Cesar informs us that the Gauls burnt their criminals alive in honour of their gods. When we contrast these authorities with the opinion of the ingenious Lord Kames, we perceive the danger of writing history upon theoretical principles instead of facts.

Among the earliest laws of all states are those regarding marriage; for the institution of marriage is coeval with the formation of society. The progress is well described by the Roman poet:—

"Inde casas postquam, ac pelles ignemque pararunt,
Et mulier conjuncta, viro concessit in unum,
Castaque privatæ veneris connubia læta
Cognita sunt, prolemque ex se videre creatam
Tum genus humanum primum mollescere cœpit."

Lucret. l. v. 1009.

And this we observe is long prior to the formation of large communities.* It is not till the arts had made some progress that men began to rear towns and cities.

It is impossible to conceive society to exist without the care of children, which presupposes a rule for ascertaining them. The first sovereigns of all nations, therefore, are said to have instituted marriage;—Menes, the first king of Egypt; Fohi, the first sovereign of China; Cecrops, the first legislator of the Greeks. The earliest laws of many civilized nations likewise provided encouragements for matrimony. By the Jewish law, a married man was for the first year exempted from going to war, and excused from

* After a fine description of the first stages of savage life, when man had scarcely advanced beyond the brute, the poet says:—"But when they began to build their first rude huts, to clothe themselves in skins, and had discovered the use of fire; when first one woman was joined to one man in the chaste endearments of mutual love, and saw their own offspring rising around them,—then only did the ferocious manners of the human race begin to soften."

Lucret. l. i. v. 1009.

the burden of any public office. Among the Peruvians he was free for a year from the payment of all taxes. The respect for the matrimonial union cannot be more clearly evinced than by the severity with which the greater part of the ancient nations restrained the crime of adultery. In reality no moral offence is equally pernicious to society.

In the marriages of many of the ancient nations a custom prevailed in many respects more honourable than the modern practice. The husband was obliged to purchase his wife either by presents, or by personal services performed to her father. When Abraham sent Eliezer to demand Rebecca for his son Isaac, he charged him with magnificent presents. Jacob served seven years for each of the daughters of Laban who were given to him in marriage. Homer alludes to this custom as subsisting in Greece. He makes Agamemnon say to Achilles that he will give him one of his daughters in marriage, and require no present in return. That the same custom was in use among the ancient inhabitants of India, of Spain, Germany, Thrace, and Gaul, appears from Strabo, Tacitus, and many other writers; and the accounts of modern travellers assure us, that it prevails at this day in China, Tartary, Tonquin, among the Moors of Africa, and the savages of America.

As Herodotus is not always to be depended on in matters that did not fall under his own observation, I know not whether we should give implicit credit to what he relates of a singular practice which prevailed among the Assyrians, with respect to marriage; though it seems to have a natural foundation in the custom abovementioned, which prevailed in most of the ancient nations. In every village, says that author, they brought together once in the year all the young women who were marriageable, and the public crier, beginning with the most beautiful, put them up to auction, one after another. The rich paid a high price for those whose figure seemed to them the most agreeable;

and the money raised by the sale of these was assigned as a portion to the more homely. When it was their turn to be put up to sale, each woman was bestowed on the man who was willing to accept of her with the smallest portion; but no man was allowed to carry off the woman he had purchased, unless he gave security that he would take her to wife; and if afterward it happened that the husband for any cause put away his wife, he was obliged to pay back the money he had received with her. The same author informs us that the Assyrian laws were more strict in providing that women should be well used by their husbands. The condition of women is, in all ages, a criterion of the progress of civilization and refinement of manners.

In an early period of society, next in importance to the regulations of marriage, are the laws which regulate the division of a man's estate after his death. Anciently, among most nations, the father of a family seems to have had the absolute power of disposing of his effects in any manner he chose. Abraham bequeathed at his death his whole possessions to Isaac, though he had many other children. To these he had made some gifts during his lifetime. Jacob gave Joseph a portion above the rest of his brethren, of the land he had taken from the Amorites. Job divided his whole inheritance in equal portions among his sons and daughters. The history of Jacob and Esau, however, affords a proof that certain rights and privileges were attendant on primogeniture, as the control over the younger children, of which even the parent could not deprive his first-born; an authority which we learn from Homer and Herodotus was inherent in the eldest son, by the custom of the most civilized nations of antiquity.

These laws, or rather consuetudinary regulations, which I have mentioned, it will be easily seen, must have arisen necessarily and imperceptibly from the state of society, rather than from any express enactments of politicians and legislators. It was not till

agriculture had first established the distinction of property and increased its value, till the wants of men were multiplied, and arts and commerce were introduced to supply them, that the rights of individuals became complicated, and regular systems of laws, enforced by proper penalties, became necessary to secure and defend them. Hence we may perceive the connexion between history and jurisprudence, and the lights which they mutually throw upon each other. The surest key to the interpretation of the laws of a country is its history; and in like manner, where the history of a country is in any periods dark and uncertain, those obscurities are best elucidated by the study of its ancient laws.*

The invention of writing is among the improvements of a society, where men have attained to a considerable degree of civilization;† but long before such invention the more important affairs even of a rude society demand some solemn method of authentication. Contracts, sales, testaments, marriages, require a certain publicity and solemnity of transaction in order to enforce their observance; and accordingly we find that among the early nations, or those which are yet in a state of barbarism, such affairs of importance are always transacted in public and before witnesses. Abraham, in the presence of the whole people, concludes a bargain for a place of burial for his wife Sarah.

* Many laws contain in their preamble an explicit declaration of the political emergency which required their enactment. The evil to be remedied is particularly specified. In this view, such laws are in themselves a species of history. Other laws point out merely the state of manners, without reference to any particular facts; but attending to the period of time when those laws were enacted, such information is perhaps even of greater importance than the other; for it supplies often what is either wanting, or but imperfectly to be gathered from the historical annals of a nation.

† On the origin of alphabetic writing, see a very ingenious and elaborate dissertation by M. Goguet. *Orig. des. Lan.* t. 1. liv. 2. c. 6.

Homer, in his description of the sculpture which adorned the shield of Achilles, represents two citizens pleading concerning the fine due for a homicide. The cause is heard before the people, and both plaintiff and defendant appeal to the testimony of witnesses:—

"There in the forum swarm a numerous train,
The subject of debate a townsman slain:
One pleads the fine discharged, which one denied,
And bade the public and the laws decide:
The witness is produced on either hand:
For this or that the partial people stand:
Th' appointed heralds still the noisy bands,
And form a ring with sceptres in their hands.
On seats of stone, within the sacred place
The reverend elders paused upon the case;
Alternate each th' attesting sceptre took,
And rising, solemn, each his sentence spoke."

Pope's Iliad, b. 18.

Some of the northern barbarous nations use, at this day, a mode of authenticating contracts by symbols, which is a nearer approach to the solemnity of writing. After the agreement is made, the parties cut a piece of wood irregularly into two tallies; each party keeps one of these, and both are given up and destroyed when the bargain is fulfilled. A custom of this kind supposes a state of society where all agreements are of the simplest nature; for those tallies, though they might certify the existence of a contract, could never give evidence of its tenor.

An invention somewhat more refined than this, and approaching still nearer to writing, was the Peruvian quipos, or cords of various colours, with certain knots upon them of different size, and differently combined. With these they contrived to accomplish most of the purposes of writing; they formed registers which contained the annals of their empire; the state of the public revenues, the account of their taxes for the support of government, and by means of them they recorded their astronomical observations.

One step farther in this process is the expression of ideas by painting. When the Spaniards arrived in Mexico, the inhabitants of the seacoasts sent intelligence to their emperor Montezuma, by a large cloth, on which they had carefully depicted everything they had seen of the appearance and progress of the invaders. Some specimens of the picture writings of the Mexicans are to be found in Dr. Robertson's history of America. Among other nations the difficulty and inconvenience of this practice taught men to abridge these signs; to give, instead of a complete picture of the object, some characteristic part of it; and by the addition of certain marks or strokes to make these pictures significant even of relations, qualities, passions, and sentiments. It is certain that by the hieroglyphical writing of the Egyptians was conveyed a great deal of complicated intelligence.*

With regard to the use made by the Egyptians of hieroglyphical writing, there have been different

* "The history of the world," says Mr. Barrow, "affords abundant evidence that, in the dawn of civilization, most nations endeavoured to fix and to perpetuate ideas by painting the figures of the objects that produced them. The Bosjesmen Hottentots, the most wild and savage race perhaps of human beings, are in the constant habit of drawing on the sides of caverns the representations of the different animals peculiar to the country. When I visited some of those caverns, I considered such drawings as the employment of idle hours; but on since reflecting that in all such caverns are also to be seen the figures of Dutch boors (who hunt these miserable creatures like wild beasts) in a variety of attitudes; some with guns in their hands, and others in the act of firing upon their countrymen; wagons sometimes proceeding and at others standing still, the oxen unyoked, and the boors sleeping; and these representations generally followed by a number of lines scored like so many tallies; I am inclined to think they have adopted this method of informing their companions of the number of their enemies, and the magnitude of the danger. The animals represented were generally such as are to be met with in the district where the drawings appeared; this, to a people who subsist by the chase and by plunder, might serve as another piece of important information."—*Barrow's Travels in China*, p. 246.

opinions. It has been disputed, for example, whether the Egyptians employed them for communicating knowledge, or for recording it, while they meant at the same time to conceal that knowledge from the vulgar. The President Goguet has endeavoured to reconcile both opinions. "It is easy to prove," says he, "that the Egyptians used hieroglyphics at first, only to transmit the knowledge of their laws, their customs, and their history to posterity. It was nature and necessity, not art and choice that produced the several kinds of hieroglyphic writing. It was an imperfect and defective invention, suited to the ignorance of the early ages. The Egyptians used it because they were ignorant of letters. Afterward, when by intercourse with the Greeks, the Egyptians learned the use of alphabetic characters, they abandoned the hieroglyphic writing, which soon ceased to be generally understood. It was then that the Egyptian priests, who like other learned men in rude ages sought to conceal and make a mystery of their knowledge, used the hieroglyphic writing as a convenient veil."

But all those methods of recording or conveying intelligence which were in use before the invention of alphabetic writing, were found extremely unfit for two most important purposes; the recording of historical events, and the promulgation of laws. It was therefore necessary for the early nations to adopt some other method of record and publication; and none other adequate to the imperfection of their knowledge and attainments was so suitable for those purposes as poetical composition. Poetry or song was therefore in all nations the first vehicle of history, and the earliest mode of promulgating laws; for nothing was found equally capable of striking with force the imagination, and impressing the memory. The earliest poetry of all nations is devoted to the celebration of the praises of their gods, and to the commemoration of the exploits of illustrious heroes. When society has made some advancement, and laws are established to guard

the rights and privileges of men, a legislator, observing with what avidity the songs of the bards are listened to, how universally they are circulated, and how tenaciously retained, judiciously avails himself of the same vehicle for the publication of his laws. Plato, in his *Minos*, informs us, that the first laws of all nations were composed in verse and sung. Apollo is recorded to have been one of the first legislators, and to have published his laws to the sound of his harp, that is, set them to music. That this mode of promulgation was in use among the ancient Greeks, the word Νομος, which signifies both a law and a song, is a direct proof: and Aristotle, in his problems, inquiring into the reason of this conformity of names between two such different objects, gives this express reason, that before the use of writing, it was customary to keep the laws in remembrance by singing them; and this, according to the same author, was the custom of many different nations. The laws of the ancient inhabitants of Spain were all in verse; as were likewise the laws of Tuisto, the first legislator of the ancient Germans.

Another mode of preserving the remembrance of historical events was by visible monuments, which were comparatively rude or artificial in their structure according to the condition of society, or the age in which they were erected. Such are those heaps of stones raised as memorials of ancient battles, single unhewn blocks, or adorned with rude sculpture expressive of the actions commemorated; and in more polished times, columns, triumphal arches, and coins or medals on which writing and sculpture are united. With respect even to the rudest of all monuments, the *cairns* or heaps of stones, or single unsculptured blocks, the historical facts which they commemorated would long be preserved by tradition; for even a migration of the inhabitants of a country or its colonization by a new race, would not be followed by a total loss of its history. The new settlers would anxiously inquire

into the meaning of such monuments, and preserve the tradition, as illustrating the ancient history of that country which they had subdued.

Coins and medals are the invention of a polished people, and are of singular use as the records of historical events. They have been justly termed portable monuments; and they have this advantage over the most durable structures that were ever raised by human industry, that, as vast numbers were commonly struck of the same impression, they stand a much fairer chance of passing down to posterity; and even their being lost or buried in the earth insures their preservation. Of such medals or coins even the spurious copies, though a fraud upon ignorant collectors and *virtuosi*, are of equal service with the original, for the purposes of the historian.*

Among the earliest institutions of all nations are those which regard *religious worship*. The sentiment

* Medals are useful in explaining events which have been left doubtful by the historian, and they record many facts which history has omitted. The history of Palmyra would have been almost unknown, but for the researches of M. Vaillant, who, from the existing medals, has made out an entire chronicle of the kings of Syria. Medals are likewise eminently useful in illustrating ancient manners and customs; in preserving the figures of ancient buildings, arms, implements of the arts, modes of dress, &c.: not to mention the pleasure they convey (a pleasure founded on the most natural and rational curiosity) in making us familiarly acquainted with the features of the great men of antiquity. As actual monuments of the fine arts, medals are entitled to great estimation. The sculpture of many of the ancient coins is superlatively beautiful; and they are supposed to exhibit on their reverses very exact representations of celebrated statues and paintings of antiquity which are now lost. This is rendered probable from the beautiful copies which we find on some of those coins of the celebrated statues which are yet preserved; as the *Venus de Medici*, the *Hercules Farnese*, and the *Apollo Belvedere*. The progress of sculpture from its first rude commencement to its utmost perfection, and its equally sensible corruption and decline, are illustrated by the bare inspection of the regular series of the Greek and Roman coins.

of religion has its origin in the nature of the human mind, or in those passions which are a part of our constitution. Let us conceive an infant thrown by some chance into a solitary desert, and there to have grown to manhood without intercourse with any other being of his own species; I think it highly probable that such a person would form to himself some idea of a First Cause, or a creative power, to whom he would refer the origin of himself, and of all he saw around him. Perceiving a settled order in the course of the sun and motion of the stars, a regular vicissitude of day and night, and a stated return of seasons, his mind could not fail to attribute that order and regularity to the operation of wisdom combined with power; and thus he would conceive some dark idea of a Being, who directed, in some distant region, the existence, the duration, the order and progress of all inanimate and animated nature. The idea first conceived from the order and regularity of nature would be strengthened by every extraordinary occurrence; and the passion of fear combining its aid, the thunder, the hurricane, or the earthquake would be interpreted into an expression of the wrath of this great invisible being; whom, therefore, the solitary savage would endeavour to appease by humiliating himself before him, by supplicating his clemency, or strive to gain his favour by praises of his beneficence. Thus an untutored human creature, merely by the operation of his natural passions, and uninstructed reason, which teaches that every effect must have a cause, and that a combined series of effects, co-operating to a wise and useful end, implies wisdom and benevolence in the cause, would arrive at the first great principles of religion. But before conceiving the idea of a being utterly imperceptible to his senses, a savage might not unnaturally seek to find him in some of the most striking objects of sense, to which he owed his most apparent and sensible benefits. Thus the sun—whose benignant influence is perceived to extend over all nature, and

whose light and heat are apparently the immediate causes of the fecundity of nature in the production of most of her works—was the first object of worship among many of the ancient nations. The element of fire presented a symbol of the sun, as possessing his most sensible qualities, and believed to have been originally a portion of his substance. The moon, the stars, whose distance removes them, like the sun, from any positive ascertainment of their nature, while at the same time the regularity of their motions conveys to the rude and uninstructed mind some idea of a living and intelligent principle which animates them, would naturally attract their share of respect and adoration. So, in like manner, as the influence of some of those superior bodies was plainly perceived to extend to inferior and terrestrial substances, as in the instances of the tides, monsoons, and alternation of the seasons, it was a most natural idea to conceive that all the phenomena of the universe, in the production and perpetuation of men, animals, plants, &c. were to be referred to the agency of those superior and ruling powers.

The unity of a supreme Being is an idea too refined for the rude and uninstructed mind, which cannot easily conceive the notion of a being extending his influence and agency at the same moment through all the boundless regions of space and upon all the modifications of matter. Hence it would seem probable that not one, but several divinities were concerned in the formation, and shared between them the regulation of the universe.

The symbolical mode of writing, already taken notice of, is likewise a probable source of the polytheism and idolatrous superstitions of many of the ancient nations. In the rude method, antecedent to writing, of communicating ideas by painting, if it was necessary to typify a god, and to describe his attributes, the artist had no other resource than to join to the image of the god those animals whose qualities were most

expressive of his attributes. In the hieroglyphical method of writing which succeeded to that of painting, and was a more compendious mode of communicating ideas, the animals naturally came to stand for symbols of the god himself; and the vulgar and illiterate would behold in those animals the figure of the god, which the wiser and more learned knew to be only typical of his attributes. As it was observed that the same god was sometimes represented by different animals, the notion would naturally arise in a rude mind, that this god occasionally transformed himself into different shapes; and hence sprang the belief of the transmigrations and metamorphoses of the gods.

The apotheosis of heroes, and the divine worship paid to men who had rendered eminent services to their country, are not more difficult to be accounted for. The homage and respect paid to the chief by his tribe must have originated with society itself. The belief of the immortality of the soul—a belief which, being founded in the nature of the human mind and its affections, obtains in every period of society, and equally among the most barbarous as among the most refined nations of the earth—had generally this concomitant idea, that the spirits of the dead are employed in the same actions and pursuits which had been their most pleasurable occupation in life. Hence, as the heroic chief had been deservedly honoured for his actions while in life, it was natural to continue those honours after his death, while it was believed that he still extended his shadowy arm over his faithful tribe, still secretly animated them in the hour of danger, and was the unseen witness of all their exploits in the career of glory.*

* The following just and beautiful reflections occur in a letter of Dr. Rundle, bishop of Derry, written February, 1737, on occasion of the death of his friend and patron, Chancellor Talbot:—

"It was the love for such benevolent characters which first

It is unnecessary to pursue this subject to a greater length. Enough has been said to show that it is easy, without having recourse to fanciful systems or laboured investigations of mythology, to furnish a natural account of the origin of idolatry and polytheism. Many excellent reflections on this subject are contained in the apocryphal book termed the Wisdom of Solomon; a book which exhibits a profound knowledge of human nature, and abounds in the most excellent precepts of morality. On the absurdity of some of those whimsical mythologies, and even of their pernicious tendency, I shall afterward have occasion to make some remarks, in treating of the earliest period of the history of the Greeks.

Among the ancient nations we find the priesthood always exercised by the chief or sovereign; for the chief must have presided in the performance of religious worship, because he presided in everything. But the sovereign of an extensive empire was necessarily obliged to share that office with his subjects, and to appoint a certain number of priests to officiate in his

dictated to every nation the belief of the immortality of the soul. The learned expressed this affection by arguments to prove the truth of this hope, which such worthiness had lighted up in their hearts. But the ignorant uttered the genuine sentiments of their nature by worshipping those benefactors of mankind, as soon as they withdrew from the earth. They judged that their goodness would secure them an interest in the governor of the world, and recommend them to his love. What he loves he will reward in the manner which will make them most happy. Enjoying the desire of the heart is the sincerest felicity. The desire of their souls was always to make others virtuous and prosperous. New abilities to serve those above whom they delighted to bless when below, they imagined, therefore, the only suitable and acceptable reward to such generous natures. Hence they concluded them appointed guardians over their kindred people, and from lamenting, were by an enthusiasm of gratitude, misled to worship them. A love of merit thus betrayed them into error and superstition; but, methinks, virtue herself will plead and obtain pardon for such idolaters."

room, while he himself retained the function of supreme pontiff. Hence arose that connexion between the monarchy and the priesthood in most of the ancient kingdoms, because the priests considered themselves as the deputies of the prince. The respect which they obtained from that character, joined to the reverence for their sacred function, together with the opinion of their superior knowledge and learning, naturally made the illiterate vulgar submit their differences to their decision as umpires: and when society had so far advanced that there was an approach toward a system of legislation, the care of framing the laws was committed to the priests; when committed to writing they were deposited in their temples; and from their order the first tribunals were supplied with judges chosen by the sovereign.

We may presume with some reason, that in the early ages the priests were among the first who cultivated the sciences. The useful arts are the immediate offspring of necessity; and in the infancy of society, every individual, according as he feels his wants, is put to the necessity of exercising his talents in some rude contrivances to supply them. The skill to construct instruments for the capture or destruction of animals, or for offence and defence in war, is found among the most barbarous nations. The rude arts of forming a clothing for the body, and the constructions of huts for shelter against the inclemencies of the air, form among such nations the occupation of every individual of the tribe or community, and even of both sexes. The contrivances of savages in the useful arts often show considerable ingenuity. The North American Indians, having no iron, use stone hatchets in cutting down the largest trees. They found, says Charlevoix, in his Travels in Canada, a very hard and tough species of flint, which by great labour they sharpen for the head of the instrument. The difficulty lay in fastening it to the handle. They cut off the top of a young tree, and making a transverse slit,

insert the stone into the opening. The parts of the tree growing together close so firmly upon the stone that it is impossible to move it. Then they cut the tree of such length as they judge sufficient for the handle.

The first boats were hollowed trunks of trees, which the Greeks termed *monoxyla*. Where trees could not be found sufficiently large, it was necessary to join planks together; and sometimes the thick and pliable bark of trees sewed together with the sinews of animals, formed a light canoe. The structure and shape of these vessels were in imitation of the form of a fish. The head or prow was sharp and conical; a moveable plank in the stern imitated the action of a fish's tail, and the oars or paddles served the purpose of the fins in giving motion to the body; such canoes are used to this day among the North American Indians.

The president Goguet has, with much ingenuity and industry, collected a great mass of information relative to the origin of the arts among the nations of antiquity; and to his learned work I refer the reader who wishes further light on those topics.

The art of agriculture is not practised till society is considerably advanced, and individuals have obtained a determined share in the property of the lands which they inhabit. It had its origin therefore in those countries which are by nature most fertile, and which, producing abundance of food, made the inhabitants stationary, as they had no incitement to roam in quest of subsistence. The early historians attribute the origin of agriculture to kings; as to Menes or Osiris among the Egyptians, and to Fohi among the Chinese: the meaning of which is no more than this:—that the first sovereigns, who with their nation or tribe, occupied a fruitful country and became stationary in it, establishing such regulations regarding property in land as would secure individuals in their possessions, naturally gave rise to the experiments of such propri-

etors to fertilize their grounds, to till, to sow, reap and store up their fruits, which a wandering savage would never think of or attempt.

But while the useful arts are the offspring of necessity, and are therefore in some degree known and practised in the earliest periods of society, the sciences, on the other hand, are less the production of necessity than of ease and leisure. Before the origin of the sciences, society must have made great progress. They presuppose an extensive and populous community, where individuals have either acquired such opulence from the successful cultivation of the arts, or from commerce, as to allow them the indulgence of that ease and immunity from labour which invites to study and speculation; or they must have been maintained for special purposes by the sovereign or by the community in such a situation. This last was the condition of the priests; and accordingly we find that, among the Egyptians, one of the most ancient and early civilized nations, the priests were the depositaries of all the sciences. Aristotle informs us that the Egyptian priests consumed the greatest part of their time in abstract studies; and when Herodotus, Diodorus, or Plato relate any fact with regard to the sciences in Egypt, they always inform us, that they received it from the mouths of the priests. Among the Babylonians too, the Chaldæans or Chaldees, who were their priests, and formed a body distinct from the rest of the people, were chiefly occupied in the study of the sciences. The name *Chaldæan*, occurring very frequently in Scripture as synonymous with *soothsayer*, shows the nature of those sciences which they chiefly cultivated.* It is not at all improbable that the frivolous and absurd science of judicial astrology, which has its origin in the prevailing passion of the uninstructed

* Although Chaldæa is the appropriate name of that region of Assyria in which Babylon was situated, the term *Chaldæan* was used, not only in Scripture but by the ancient profane authors, to denote *an astrologer or soothsayer.*

mind to dive into futurity, was the first motive that led men to the attentive observation of the motions of the heavenly bodies; and consequently that superstition was the parent of that useful and sublime science of astronomy.* It is certain that to those Chaldæans or soothsayers the best informed authors of antiquity have joined in attributing the first astronomical discoveries. According to Diodorus, they had observed the motion of the planets; they had divided the zodiac into twelve signs, and each sign into thirty degrees; and they had ascertained the precise length of the year very near to the truth.

As an attention to their own preservation is the first care of mankind, we may naturally conjecture, that among those sciences to which in the early nations men would chiefly devote their attention, that of medicine would have a principal place. All savage nations have a pharmacy of their own, equal in general to their wants. Luxury creating new diseases requires a profounder knowledge of medicine and of the animal economy. Savages are often eminently skilful in the knowledge of the virtues of plants in the cure of diseases, and are very dexterous in the treatment of wounds. But without the knowledge of the internal structure of the body, medicine can hardly deserve the name of a science. And we are certain that anatomy could only have been practised in an advanced state of society, when arts had attained a considerable degree of perfection. The Jews, we know, in the days of Moses, used in some operations of surgery a sharp stone instead of a knife; a certain proof that they could not have dissected a human body. And although the Egyptians practised very early the evisceration and embalming of bodies, we hear nothing of any attempts at anatomy till the age of the Ptole-

* Kepler remarks, that astrology is the foolish daughter of a wise mother; but it is more probable that the genealogy was just the reverse—and that the wise daughter sprang from the foolish mother.

mys, after the time of Alexander the Great, when, as we learn from Pliny, those monarchs established a medical school at Alexandria, and commanded dead bodies to be dissected, for the improvement of medicine and surgery; a circumstance which seems to indicate that it was at that time a new practice. But of the arts and sciences of this remarkable people, the Egyptians, as well as of their government, laws, and manners, I propose to treat more particularly in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

Of the Egyptians—Early Civilization—Inundation of the Nile—Government—Laws—Manners—Arts—Obelisks and Pyramids—Sciences—Philosophical Opinions—Character.

The Egyptians are so remarkable a people, and boast of such extraordinary progress in civilization and in the arts, while the rest of the world was comparatively involved in darkness and ignorance, that their early history deservedly claims a preferable share of attention to any of the contemporary nations of antiquity. It is highly probable, too, that from this people, as from a focus of illumination, most of the European nations have, by the natural progress of knowledge, received a great part of their instruction both in the arts and in the sciences. The Egyptians instructed and enlightened the Greeks; the Greeks performed the same beneficial office to the Romans, who, in their turn, instructing the nations whom they conquered or colonized, have transmitted the rudiments of that knowledge which the industry and the genius of the moderns are continually extending and advancing to perfection.

It is probable that the Egyptians were among the

most early civilized of the nations of the earth; and hence arises some excuse for that vanity, which they possessed in common with most nations, of attributing to themselves a most prodigious antiquity. In the chronicles recorded, or more properly fabricated by Manetho, the Egyptian monarchy had subsisted before his time (300 years A. C.) for more than 100,000 years. Laying little weight on such extravagant computations, we may conclude with some reason, that at least they were a very ancient and early civilized people. It is evident from the books of Moses, that in the time of Abraham, about 430 years after the flood, Egypt was a populous country, the seat of a very splendid and well-regulated monarchy. In the days of Jacob, we see further proofs of its civilization: the kingdom divided into departments or municipalities; ministers for state affairs with whom the sovereign held council; prisons for the confinement of criminals, which argues a system of penal laws properly enforced; a priesthood enjoying settled revenues; a trade in slaves—all these circumstances indicate a great advancement in civilization, and a proportional antiquity.

M. Voltaire, who is frequently more fanciful than judicious in his conjectures, and gives too much scope to theory in his historical writings, is inclined to question the common opinion of the antiquity of the Egyptian nation; and imagines that the country of Egypt was not peopled till the neighbouring African or Arabian tribes had made such advancement in agriculture and in the arts as to regulate and turn to their advantage those periodical inundations of the Nile, which, says he, must have rendered that country uninhabitable for four months in the year. But here the theory is at variance with the facts. The periodical inundation of the Nile originally extended over a very narrow tract only of the country of Egypt, nor were its benefits at all considerable, till the art and industry of the people, by intersecting the adjacent lands with numberless canals, and making large reservoirs in the upper country

to let down the water through these canals, contrived to spread the inundation over a much greater extent of ground than it would naturally have covered. There never were any efforts made to restrain those inundations, which the Egyptians justly considered as their greatest blessing, and the source of their country's fertility. All their endeavours, on the contrary, were, and are at this day, to extend their effects over as great a portion of the land as possible. So far, therefore, from any argument arising from the nature of this country against the antiquity of its population, a very strong argument thence arises in favour of that antiquity; for, where nature had done so much in fertilizing the banks of a fine river, and an easy method presented itself of extending that fertility over all the level country, it is probable that there men would first form stationary settlements, and the art of agriculture be first practised, where nature so kindly invited them to second her operations by art and industry.

And here it may be incidentally remarked, that the cause of the periodical inundation of the Nile has been satisfactorily explained by Pliny (Nat. Hist. l. v. cap. 9), and nearly in similar terms by Dr. Pococke. The north winds, says this writer, which begin to blow about the end of May, drive the clouds formed by the vapours of the Mediterranean to the southward, as far as the mountains of Ethiopia, where, being stopped in their course, and condensed on the summits of those mountains, they fall down in violent rains, which continue for some months. The same winds likewise sensibly increase the inundation in the level country at the mouth of the river, by driving in the water from the Mediterranean. The increase of the river necessary to produce a season of fertility is from fourteen to sixteen cubits. If the waters do not rise to fourteen according to the Nilometer, which is a stone pillar erected on the point of an island on the river between Geeza and Cairo, it is accounted a season of scarcity, and the inhabitants have a proportional abatement of

their taxes; if they rise to sixteen cubits, there is generally an abundant harvest. We have already observed that, without the aid of art, these inundations would be confined to a narrow portion of the country, and in that case the height of the flood would be more prejudicial than serviceable. It is by the regulation and distribution of the waters by means of numberless canals, which extend to a considerable distance, that the benefit of the periodical floods is rendered general. When the inundation has attained its height, as marked by the Nilometer, a proclamation is made for the opening of these canals; and they are likewise shut by a similar order of government when the season of irrigation is over.

The earliest accounts of the Egyptians mention them as living under a monarchical government; and, as in most monarchies, the crown, probably at first elective, had soon become hereditary. The power of the sovereign, however, if we may credit the accounts of ancient authors, who, in the history of this people, have in many things palpably displayed both exaggeration and falsehood, was admirably limited by the laws, which even went so far as to regulate the stated employments of the prince during all the hours of the day. These notions, it must be owned, are not easily reconcilable with the ideas which the same authors give of the despotic authority of those princes; of the luxury and splendour in which they lived; the superstitious veneration that was paid to their persons; and the abject slavery in which the lower ranks of the people were kept, whom the sovereigns, for the gratification of their own vanity, employed in the severest labour in constructing those immense fabrics which seem to have been reared for no other end than to excite the wonder of posterity.

The cares both of civil government and of religion seem in Egypt to have been committed to the same hands. Besides the ordinary offices of government, a principal part of the duty of the monarch was the

regulation of all that regarded religion. The priests, on the other hand, who formed a very numerous body, and had a third part of the lands allotted to them in property, were not confined to the exercise of religious duties, but filled the highest offices in the state. They had the custody of the public records; it was their province to impose and levy the taxes; to regulate weights and measures; and out of their order were chosen all the magistrates and judges.

The supreme national tribunal in Egypt was composed of thirty judges; ten from each of the three principal cities of Heliopolis, Thebes, and Memphis; and to these judges a solemn oath was administered on their entry upon office, that even the commands of their sovereign should not sway them in the execution of their duty. The administration of justice was no burden on the subjects; the tribunals were open to all ranks of the people, without expense of any kind; as no professional advocates were employed for the pleading of causes, and the judges, whose business it was to investigate and do justice, were supported at the expense of the state; a regulation having a considerable show of wisdom if obtaining in a small state at an early period of society, but evidently not adapted for an extensive and highly civilized community.

The penal laws of Egypt were remarkably severe. Whoever had it in his power to save the life of a citizen, and neglected that duty was punished as his murderer; a law which we must presume admitted of much limitation according to circumstances. It appears to have been from the same motive of preserving the lives of the citizens that if a person was found murdered, the city within whose bounds the murder had been committed was obliged to embalm the body in the most costly manner, and bestow on it the most sumptuous funeral. Perjury was justly held a capital crime; for there is no offence productive of more pernicious consequences to society. Calumniators were condemned to the same punishment which the calum-

niated person either had or might have suffered, had the calumny been believed. The citizen who was so base as to disclose the secrets of the state to its enemies, was punished by the cutting out of his tongue; and the forger of public instruments or private deeds, the counterfeiter of the current coin, and the user of false weights and measures, were condemned to have both their hands cut off. The laws for the preservation of the chastity of women were extremely rigid: emasculation was the punishment of him who violated a free woman, and burning to death was the punishment of an adulterer.

The president Goguet ranks among the penal laws of the Egyptians a singular regulation of policy which is mentioned by Diodorus. It is generally known how much the ancients concerned themselves with regard to the disposal of their bodies after death. To be deprived of funeral rites they considered as one of the greatest calamities. The Egyptians did not, like most other nations, consign the bodies of the dead to destruction; they preserved them by embalming, and celebrated their obsequies with extraordinary solemnity. But these funeral honours were never bestowed unless in virtue of a solemn and judicial decree. A court composed of forty judges granted their warrant for every funeral. The character of the deceased was rigorously investigated, and if any criminal or improper conduct was proved, the customary honours were refused to him. If his life had been virtuous and exempt from all blame, a public panegyric was pronounced on his memory, and permission was granted for the usual embalming and obsequies. The most singular and at the same time the most admirable circumstance attending this custom, was, that the sovereigns themselves, though venérated during their lives with an almost superstitious regard, which forbade all scrutiny into their actions, were yet after death subjected to the same rigorous and impartial inquest with the meanest of their subjects; and Diodorus as-

sures us that some of the Egyptian kings had been deprived of funeral obsequies, and their memories thus consigned to infamy, by the judgment of that solemn tribunal.

Among the most remarkable laws of the Egyptians was that of Amasis, which ordained every individual to appear annually before a particular magistrate, and give an account of his profession, and the manner in which he acquired his subsistence. A capital punishment, it is said, was decreed against the person who could not show that he procured his living by honest means. We shall observe a similar institution in treating of the Athenian republic. The unnecessary contracting of debts was likewise restrained in Egypt by a singular and very laudable regulation. The debtor was obliged to give in pledge the embalmed body of his father, to remain with the creditor till the debt was discharged. He who died without redeeming this sacred pledge was deprived himself of funeral obsequies.

The population of Egypt was encouraged by many salutary laws. The exposing of infants was restrained by the severest penalties. A man was obliged to rear and educate not only the children born to him in the state of marriage, but to acknowledge for legitimate, and maintain, all the children he had by his slaves or concubines. Homicide was punished with death, even when committed on a slave.

The manners of the Egyptians were very early formed. We find the greatest part of those customs which are mentioned by Diodorus, Herodotus, and others of the ancient historians, to have been common at the time when Joseph was carried into Egypt. This people, according to the testimony of all antiquity, discovered a great constancy of national character, and a singular attachment to their ancient manners and customs. But these underwent a remarkable change in the time of Psammeticus, who began to reign in Egypt 670 years before the Christian era. This prince

opened the ports of Egypt, both on the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, to all strangers, and gave particular encouragement to the Greeks to settle in his dominions. He assigned them portions of land in the country, employed some learned men among them to instruct the Egyptian youth in the Greek language, and endeavoured by every means to overcome that illiberal prejudice which had hitherto kept this people sequestered from all other nations. Such likewise was the policy of Amasis, who reigned about a century after Psammeticus, and who, as he may properly be considered the last, so he was one of the wisest and the best of the Egyptian monarchs. It was in the reign of his son Psammenitus that Cambyses overturned this ancient monarchy, and reduced Egypt into a province of the Persian empire. But here we are anticipating the order of events. It is the state of Egypt, the attainments and the manners of the nation before its conquest and reduction, that we are at present considering.

We must regard the ancient Egyptians as the earliest nation whom history assures us with certainty to have made any progress in those arts which conduce to the luxuries or elegances of life. They understood very early the use of metals, both in the fabrication of serviceable utensils, in ornamental decorations, and in the coining of money as a medium of commerce. Of this we have abundant evidence both from the sacred and profane historians.

The science of architecture was early brought to great perfection in Egypt. The antiquity of those immense structures which yet remain in that country is extremely uncertain. It seems peculiar to the climate of Egypt, that time appears scarcely to make any sensible impression on those monuments of human industry. The cause is plausibly assigned by *De Maillet*, in his *Description de l'Egypte.* Rain and frost, says that author, which in other countries are the destroyers of all the works of art which are ex-

posed to the air, are utterly unknown in Egypt. The structures of that country, its pyramids and its obelisks, can sustain no injury unless from the sun and wind, which have scarce any sensible effect in wasting or corroding their materials. Some of the Egyptian obelisks, which are supposed to be more ancient than the pyramids, and consequently above 3000 years old, are entire at this day: one in particular may be seen at Rome, which was transported thither by Augustus, and which Pliny says was supposed to be older than the time of Sesostris. Those immense masses, consisting of one entire block of granite, were hewn in the quarries of Upper Egypt, whence they were conveyed by water to the place where they were to be erected. The contrivance for transporting them is described by Pliny, and is equally simple and ingenious. The Nile runs near to the base of those mountains where the quarries are situated. A canal was cut from the river to the spot where the obelisk lay, and made to pass under it, so as to leave the stone supported by its two extremities resting on either bank of the canal. Two broad boats were then loaded with a great weight of stones, so as to sink them so deep in the water as to allow them to pass freely under the obelisk: when immediately under it, the stones were thrown out; the boats, of consequence, rose in the water, and bore up the obelisk, which thus passed along the canal into the Nile, and was thence guided by other canals to the place where it was to be erected. Of the purpose for which these obelisks were reared we can only form conjectures, as the ancient writers give us no information. It has been supposed that they were intended to serve as gnomons for astronomical purposes, or to determine the length of the solar year by the measure of the meridian shadows: but their situation upon uneven ground, and the number of them, sometimes three or four erected in the same place, give no countenance to that idea. Pliny indeed tells us that one of the Egyptian obelisks which

was brought to Rome and placed in the Campus Martius, was applied by Augustus to serve the purpose of a gnomon to an immense sun-dial, which was engraven on a level pavement of stone at the base of the obelisk; but as he terms this a new and admirable use of the obelisk, we must thence infer that it was different from their original purpose, which was probably to commemorate or record either public events in the history of the nation, or to be registers of the seasons as affected by the periodical inundations of the Nile.

The whole country of Egypt abounds with the remains of ancient magnificence. There is reason to believe, that Thebes, in Upper Egypt, was, at the time of the Trojan war, one of the most opulent and best-peopled cities in the universe. The ancient authors assure us that no city in the world equalled it in ornamental buildings. Diodorus mentions in particular four temples, the largest and most ancient of which remained at the time when he himself was in Egypt (about A. D. 20) and was half a league in circumference. Its hundred gates mentioned by Homer, which could each send out 200 horsemen and chariots, is a bold poetical exaggeration; but if the ruins, yet visible at Luxor, as described by Pococke, Granger, and later travellers, are, as they have been generally supposed, the remains of Thebes, they give very high ideas of the extent and magnificence of that ancient city.

The pyramids in the neighbourhood of Memphis have been by some authors assigned to the age of Sesostris; but this era, which is itself extremely uncertain, is, according to all probability, much too early for the date of those structures. There is ground to believe that they did not exist in the age of Homer; for that poet, who frequently mentions Egypt, and is fond of relating singularities of that country, says nothing of the pyramids, and makes no mention of Memphis, though that city lay in the direct way to

Thebes. Aristotle has made this observation; and it has hence been inferred, with much probability, that in the age of Homer those stupendous fabrics either did not exist or were but just building. Homer, according to the most probable authorities, lived about 900 years B. C., which brings the date of the pyramids, if then building, nearly to the age assigned them by Diodorus. But neither the age nor the builders of those structures are known with any degree of certainty; a just reward, as Pliny well remarks, of the vanity of such undertakings.

The description of those remarkable monuments has been given by many travellers. A more curious investigation would be to discover the manner in which those immense piles were reared, as well as the purpose for which they were erected. The first, however, does not fall within the province of a work of this nature: I content myself, therefore, with observing, that the President Goguet, in his Origin of Laws, vol. iii., has given a very plausible and curious account of the construction of the pyramids, resting chiefly on the authority of Herodotus, to which I refer the reader. On the second head, it may be remarked, that the Egyptians entertained the belief that death did not separate the soul from the body, but that the connexion remained as long as the latter continued entire and unconsumed. It was, therefore, their utmost care to preserve the carcasses of the dead from the natural decay from corruption, as well as from accidental violence. Hence the practice of embalming the dead, and of depositing them in places secured from all injury. The bodies of the rich were preserved at a vast expense by taking out the corruptible viscera, filling the cavity with the strongest and most costly spices and unguents, wrapping them round in numberless folds of linen, impregnated with resinous substances, incrusting them with thick coats of paint, and lastly, casing them in thick boxes of the most durable species of wood. The bodies of the inferior classes of the

people were simply injected with some composition which exsiccated the entrails and fleshy parts, and were covered over by a cheaper and simpler process, with some resinous substance which excluded the air. From a custom already mentioned, regarding the pledging of these mummies as a security for debts, it would appear that it was the practice to keep them unburied at least for the course of one generation. After that period, they were deposited in caverns, dug in dry and rocky situations, of which they concealed the entrance with the utmost care and artifice of construction. The sovereigns, who could command the labours of their subjects, thought they could not employ them better than in building such repositories for their bodies after death as should be proof against the injuries of time, and even in some measure set human malice at defiance; for the demolition of a pyramid, considering the immense blocks of stone of which it is formed, would be a work attended with such labour and difficulty, that no ordinary motive could prompt to it.*

* The largest of the pyramids is an equilateral square, of which each side measures at the base 693 English feet. The stones of which it is composed are many of them 30 feet in length, 4 in height, and 3 in breadth. The superficial contents of the area are 480,249 feet, or something more than 11 English acres. The height of the pyramid is 481 feet, which is about the height of the top of the cupola of St. Paul's church in London. It rises from the base to the apex in steps of near 4 feet in height, and the summit is a square platform of 13 feet, composed of 10 or 12 massy stones. This form of construction in the manner of steps was probably given to the building that it might receive a coating of marble, by laying upon each step a block of a prismatical form, which would thus bring the exterior of the building to a smooth surface, which is the appearance of most of the smaller pyramids at this day. A late traveller, Mr. Bruce, has hence formed a new opinion with regard to the construction of those masses. It is his notion that they have been formed out of immense insulated rocks, which stood upon the spot; and which, after having been hewn into a pyramidal form, were encrusted or coated over with a mason-work of marble or stone. This idea, if just, would render the construction of those vast piles

It must be allowed, that those monuments which remain to us of the works of art among the Egyptians, though venerable on account of their antiquity, and sometimes exhibiting a grand and sublime appearance from their immensity, are extremely defective in beauty and elegance. How infinitely inferior in point of taste are the pyramids, the obelisks, the sphynx and colossal statues, the pillars of Luxor, to the simplest remains of the ancient temples in Greece! In architecture, one of the most obvious inventions, and one of the greatest improvements, both in point of utility and beauty, the construction of an arch, was quite unknown to the Egyptians. This defect gives an awkward and heavy appearance to their buildings, and must have occasioned a vast expense of labour, which might otherwise have been spared. In the arts of painting and sculpture, those specimens, of which a vast number have remained entire to our days, are, in general, greatly deficient in elegance and beauty. In the Egyptian statues, we may observe a perfect knowledge of the human proportions, but without any capacity in the artist to give to his figures animation or action. We may remark in general, with regard to the remains of the arts in Egypt, that they either occasion surprise from their immensity, and the prodi-

considerably easier, and more within the compass of human industry, than the common opinions regarding the mode of their fabrication. "It has been a constant belief," says Mr. Bruce, "that the stones composing those pyramids have been brought from the Libyan mountains; although any one who will take the pains to remove the sand on the south side, will there find the solid rock hewn into steps. And in the roof of the large chamber, where the sarcophagus stands, as also in the top of the roof of the gallery, as you go up into the chamber, you see large fragments of the rock; affording an unanswerable proof, that those pyramids were once huge rocks, standing where they now are; that some of them, the most proper from their form, were chosen for the body of the pyramid, and the others hewn down into steps, to serve for the superstructure, and the exterior parts of them."—Bruce's *Travels into Egypt and Abyssinia*, vol. i.

gious labour and cost employed in their construction, or are objects of curiosity on account of the very early period at which they were executed; but considered as objects of taste, they afford but a small degree of pleasure to the critical eye.

As the Egyptians were more early acquainted than any other nations of antiquity with the useful, and even the elegant arts, they were no less eminent for their early cultivation of the sciences. The arts and sciences are indeed so intimately connected, that there can be no great progress in the one, without a proportional advancement in the other; as for example, architecture, which requires a knowledge of geometry and the laws of mechanics; the working of metals, dying, which presuppose an acquaintance with chymical principles. "When we see," says Millot, "the Egyptians surveying their lands with precision, distributing the waters of the Nile by numberless canals, measuring with exactness the increase of the river, making and employing various species of machinery, measuring time, and calculating the revolutions of the stars, we must suppose them to have attained a considerable proficiency in the science of mathematics. The Egyptians understood the division of the zodiac into twelve signs, which argues a considerable advancement in astronomy. They were able to calculate both solar and lunar eclipses. Thales, who owed all his astronomical knowledge to the Egyptians, predicted that famous eclipse of the sun 585 years before the Christian era, which separated the armies of the Medes and Lydians at the moment of an engagement. The position of the pyramids, most exactly corresponding to the four cardinal points, is, not without reason, urged as a proof of the knowledge of the Egyptians in astronomy; for it requires, even at present, no mean knowledge in that science to trace a meridian line with perfect accuracy. It is probable, too, that the Egyptians had an idea of the motion of the earth, since Pythagoras, who has given plain int-

mations of that opinion, is known to have acquired his astronomical knowledge in that country."

I have already taken notice of the very limited knowledge which the Egyptians possessed of medicine till the age of the Ptolemys, when an anatomical school was founded at Alexandria.

With regard to their philosophical opinions, they maintained themselves so mysterious a silence, and the accounts of those few of the ancients who were admitted to a knowledge of their mysteries are so obscure and imperfect, that it is at this day scarcely possible to attain to any distinct ideas regarding either their moral, physical, or theological doctrines. On the one hand, it seems a plain inference, that if the morality taugnt by the priests was not more pure than what was practised by the people, the Egyptians would certainly merit on that score no encomium. On the other hand, we must conclude, that if the moral doctrines of Pythagoras and of Plato, who both studied in Egypt, were learned in that school, their speculative opinions were right, whatever we may judge of their practice. In theology, too, while the superstitious worship of the common people was so grossly absurd as to draw on them the ridicule of all other nations, the secret doctrines of the priests are generally allowed to have been pure, refined, and rational. One Great Intelligence was supposed to preside over all nature. Subordinate spirits, portions of that Intelligence, presided over the actions of mankind, as the guardians of the human soul, which was derived from the same divine original, but was destined to undergo a certain number of transmigrations through different bodies, before it was reunited to the great parent-spirit. They believed in the immortality of the soul. Diodorus tells us that they esteemed the present state of existence to be of no value in comparison with that which was to come, and which was to be the reward of a life spent in this world in the practice of virtue.

The Egyptians supposed the material world to have

arisen from the joint operation of three principles. The first was the Great Intelligencer or universal spirit—the *anima mundi** which gives form to the universe and to all its parts. The second was Matter, which they supposed to have existed from all eternity. The third was the nature of that matter, which, from its imperfection, opposed that good which the universal spirit always aimed at producing, and frequently contaminated his works with evil. To these three principles, in their mythology, they gave the appellations of Osiris, Isis and Typhon. The priests illustrated these radical doctrines by numberless allegories and fables, which, being literally received by the vulgar, produced a thousand absurdities in their worship and opinions, while the real meaning was known but to a few.

We have seen in the Egyptians, a people remarkable for their early civilization—for the antiquity of their government, the systematic order of their civil policy, the wisdom of many of their laws, and their singular progress in the arts—at a period when almost all the nations of the earth were sunk in ignorance and barbarism. It must, therefore, without doubt appear extraordinary, that, with all these advantages, the character of this people was held extremely low, and even despisable among the contempotary nations of antiquity. This peculiarity may, perhaps, be traced up to a single cause. They were a people who chose to sequester themselves from the rest of mankind, and obstinately or fastidiously refused all correspondence with other nations. They were not known to them by their conquests; they had no connexion with them by their commerce; and they had a rooted antipathy to the manners, and even to the persons of all strangers.

To illustrate the preceding observation: the Egyptians properly speaking were never a military people. The foreign conquests of Sesostris have been much

* Soul of the world.

vaunted by some of the ancient historians, and have in part, at least, obtained credit with some of the moderns. It may, perhaps, appear a blameable degree of scepticism to doubt the reality of those distant expeditions of Sesostris altogether; yet for three reasons I should incline to that opinion. The first is, that such expeditions must have required such extensive armaments as the country of Egypt at no period of its history could ever have furnished. The army of Sesostris which he led into Asia is said to have amounted to 600,000 foot, 24,000 horse, and 27,000 armed chariots: a force which it may be boldly averred is ten times beyond what the narrow territory of Egypt could ever have maintained or equipped. Secondly, no reasonable motive could urge a sovereign of Egypt to adopt such projects of conquest, to which the national character of his people and their extraordinary prejudices must have offered the strongest resistance. And, lastly, it has never been pretended that the Egyptians gained the smallest accession of territory, or derived any advantage whatever from those prodigious conquests. In every authentic period of their history, the character of this African people has been feeble and unwarlike. They had a strong turn to the arts of peace; and sought to provide for that security which is favourable to them, by keeping on foot a pretty numerous militia, for defence in case of invasion from other nations; but even this with little effect, for they were successively subdued, and enslaved by almost all the predominant powers of antiquity.

With regard to any intercourse with other nations by commerce, the Egyptians had so little genius of that sort, that while the Red Sea was left open to all the maritime nations who chose to frequent it, they would not suffer any of those foreign vessels to enter an Egyptian port. They had no ships of their own, for their country produced no timber fit for the construction even of the small boats employed in navigating the Nile, which obliged them to use baked earth for

that purpose, and sometimes reeds covered with varnish. They held the sea in detestation from a religious prejudice, and they avoided all intercourse with mariners. We may judge, then, with what probability the ancient writers tell us of the naval armament of Sesostris, consisting of 400 long ships-of-war. Whence came the timber, whence the skill to construct them, and whence the mariners to navigate them?

Toward the decline of the Egyptian monarchy, the sovereigns of that country began to pay some attention to commerce. Bocchoris, who reigned about 670 years before the Christian era, published, as Diodorus informs us, some very wise laws relative to that object; and in this he was imitated by some of the succeeding princes. Psammeticus, who lived about a century after him, encouraged foreign nations to resort to the Egyptian ports, and allowed some Greeks to form commercial settlements upon the coasts. Nechos, his successor, with the same view, attempted the renewal of a project which is said to have been first conceived by Sesostris, of joining the Red Sea with the Mediterranean by a canal from one of the branches of the Nile; but this great work was not completed till 400 years afterward, by Ptolemy Philadelphus.* The genius of Nechos was extremely opposite to the general character of his people. He is said to have equipped a fleet on the Red Sea, which he wisely manned with Phœnician navigators, with instructions to circumnavigate the continent of Africa, a voyage which we are told they accomplished in three years; a fact, which, considering the period of time (610 B. C.), we need not add, is altogether incredible.

The singularity of the Egyptians with respect to manners, and their obstinate attachment to customs and practices, many of them repugnant to reason and

* A part of this canal is still visible, running from Cairo to the northeast of the Berkel-el-Hadj, or, lake of the Pilgrims, where it loses itself.

the ordinary feelings of mankind, contributed more than any other cause to draw on them the aversion, and excite the ridicule of other nations. They had not only, as already remarked, an antipathy to all strangers; but some of their regulations seem calculated to encourage political disunion, and dislike to each other. All professions in Egypt were hereditary; a piece of policy which has received from some authors much encomium, bnt which deserves much more to be condemned than applauded. If the same dispositions and the same talents descended invariably from father to son, we might agree with M. Bossuet in holding it presumable, that men would execute in greater perfection what they had always seen done, and what had been their sole employment from infancy; but daily experience shows that neither talents nor inclinations are invariably hereditary, and therefore the argument is futile. But not only were all professions hereditary among this people; the rank and dignity of each was most scrupulously settled, nor could any eminence of merit, or of fortune, entitle an individual to higher respect or honour than what belonged to the meanest of his class; a policy repressive of all emulation, and of that generous ambition on which every species of excellence depends; while, at the same time, it was a fatal source of jealousy, animosity, and disunion.

Another species of the most pernicious policy among the Egyptians, which contributed not only to render them contemptible to other nations, but to foment discords among themselves, was the variety and difference of the objects of religious worship in the different provinces of the kingdom. The same animals that were regarded, in one province, with the most superstitious reverence, were, in another, the objects of detestation and abhorrence. In one quarter, they tamed the crocodiles, adorned them with gold and jewels, and worshipped them; in another, they killed those animals without mercy. In one province, the

most sacred animal was a dog; in another, they reckoned dog's flesh the most delicate food. Cats were adored in one district, and rats in another. From these differences arose perpetual and violent animosities; for there are no contentions so rancorous as those which spring from the most trifling differences in religious worship or opinion. "The multitude," says Diodorus, "have been often inflamed into the highest pitch of fury, on account of the sacrilegious murder of a *divine cat*."

The extravagant length to which the Egyptians carried their veneration for their consecrated animals exceeds all belief. The sacred crocodile, the dog, or the cat, were kept in an enclosed space set apart, adjoining to the temples dedicated to their worship. They were constantly attended by men of the highest rank, whose business was to provide them in the choicest victuals, which they were at pains to dress in the manner they supposed most agreeable to their palate. They washed them in warm baths, and anointed them with the richest perfumes. The finest carpets were spread for them to lie on: chains of gold and circlets of precious stones were hung around their legs and necks: and when the stupid animal, insensible of the honours that were bestowed on him, died like the rest of his kind, the whole province was filled with lamentation; and not only the fortunes of the priests, but the public revenue was without scruple expended in the performance of the most sumptuous funeral obsequies.

It is not then to be wondered that the superstitions of the Egyptians were a copious subject of ridicule to other nations of antiquity, and contributed to degrade them in the opinion of those whose objects of religious worship, if not fundamentally more rational, were less ludicrous, less childish and unmanly. What could they think of a nation, where, as Herodotus tells us, if a house was on fire, the father of the family would take more pains to save his cats than his wife and

children; where a mother would be transported with joy at the news of her child being devoured by a crocodile; or where the soldiers, returning from a military expedition, would come home loaded with a precious booty of dogs, cats, hawks, and vultures?

The general character of the Egyptians with respect to morals contributed likewise to draw upon them the disesteem of other nations. They have been generally accused by the ancients of great cunning and insincerity in their dealings. The term *Aigupeaizein* (to play the Egyptian), was proverbially used by the Greeks to signify *cozening* and *overreaching*. The contempt they expressed for strangers naturally stamped them with the character of a vain and insolent people. Pliny, in his panegyric on Trajan, terms them *ventosa et insolens natio.** With respect to modesty and decorum, their manners were shamefully loose. In the festivals in honour of their gods, they committed such indecencies, that Herodotus, Diodorus, and others of the ancient writers, not over delicate themselves, have expressed a reluctance to enter into particular details.

Upon the whole, we may sum up in a few words the character of the Egyptians. They were a people remarkable for their early civilization, and for the systematic arrangement of their government and civil policy; though many of their particular institutions and usages were extremely faulty and impolitic. Their early subjection to laws, and their acquaintance with the arts and sciences, attracted the admiration of other nations, who, at first, inferior to them in those particulars, and instructing themselves from their acquirements, came afterward to outstrip them very far in the same departments. Their contemptible vanity, which persuaded them that they had attained in everything the summit of excellence, and their disdaining to borrow from or imitate the practices of

* A fickle and supercilious people.

other nations, sufficiently account for the small degree of improvement in those arts and sciences of which they were the inventors, and for their never advancing beyond the point of mediocrity. The character of their mind was feeble; they had no emulation, no ardour of enterprise, no ambition of extending their dominion over nations whom they despised, or of holding intercourse with them in the way of commerce. The hatred and contempt which they entertained for others was returned tenfold upon themselves, for there is no debt so certainly and so liberally repaid as contempt; and hence we may reasonably suspect exaggeration in the picture which the ancient writers have drawn of their manners and morals. Under the influence of this caution, I have endeavoured to describe them with impartiality, and believe I have assigned them as much merit as they truly deserve. I shall remark in its proper place the strong resemblance which, in many points, they bear to an Asiatic nation, known to Europeans only in modern times—I mean the Chinese.

CHAPTER V.

Of the Phœnicians—Alphabetic Writing—Sanchoniatho—Navigation—Tyre.

Among the ancient nations who first showed a considerable degree of civilization and advancement in the useful arts, the Phœnicians deserve particular notice. It seems to rest on as good authority as can be brought for the origin of any of the useful arts, that it is to this eastern people that the world is indebted for the invention of writing, and for the first attempts at commercial navigation. I do not think the hypothetical reasoning of M. de Voltaire has much weight

when he argues that this people, being the earliest nation which practised commerce, must have first found the expediency of using certain arbitrary characters for the purpose of carrying on their traffic, and keeping regular accounts. The Mexicans and Peruvians were acquainted with navigation, and practised commerce, and were, in other respects, highly polished and refined; yet they knew nothing of writing. The fact of the Phœnicians having very early attained to the use of writing seems to rest on better evidence than hypothetical reasoning. It seems to be agreed among the best informed writers, that the fragments of Sanchoniatho, though their antiquity has been vaunted by Porphyry and Philo considerably beyond the truth, are yet to be regarded as the composition of the earliest of the profane writers, and of a much more ancient date than any works of a Greek author. Sanchoniatho is generally supposed to have been contemporary with Joshua, who died 1443 years before the birth of Christ, and about 500 years before the cities of Attica were united under Theseus. What remains of the works of this author are some fragments preserved by Eusebius, which were translated from the Phœnician language into Greek by Philo of Byblos. They give an account of the genealogy of the Phœnician gods; of Cœlus and of Saturn, and other deities afterward adopted by the Greeks; and of the cosmogony or origin of the world; accounts which Sanchoniatho says he collected from the most ancient historical monuments. The authenticity of these fragments has been questioned, and they have been supposed to have been forged by Porphyry from enmity to the Christian religion, and a desire to show that the Pagans could boast of writings of equal antiquity with the Books of Moses. But it has been well observed, in answer to this supposition, that if Porphyry, or any other person, had made the forgery for such a purpose, they would not have fabricated a mass of nonsense and absurdity, which would throw ridicule and disgrace on any system

it was meeant to support. Holding those fragments, therefore, as authentic, they prove that alphabetic writing was in use among the Phœnicians many ages before the Greeks had the smallest acquaintance with it.*

To the Phœnicians, all antiquity has joined in attributing the invention of navigation; or, at least, it seems an agreed point that they were the earliest among the nations of antiquity who made voyages for the sake of commerce. The Canaanites (for it is by that name that the Phœnicians are known in Scripture) were a powerful people in the days of Abraham. Their situation, occupying a narrow country on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean, and confined on all quarters toward the land by the surrounding tribes, naturally induced them to turn their attention to navigation. In the days of Abraham, we learn with some certainty that they had sailed to the coast of Greece; for Inachus, whose daughter Io they carried off from that country, is generally supposed contemporary with Abraham. When we come down to the time of the Hebrew Judges, we find the Phœnicians so far advanced as a commercial people as to be able to send colonies to distant quarters, and to form settlements for trade both on the European and Asiatic coasts. Among their first settlements were those of Cyprus and Rhodes. They then passed into Greece, into Sicily and Sardinia, and thence into the southern parts of Spain. They did not confine their voyages to the Mediterranean sea, but, passing the straits, established themselves in the Isle of Gades, and built a settlement anciently named Gadir, now Cadiz. Stretching southward from the straits, they formed settlements likewise on the western coast of Africa. Strabo

*See Goguet's elaborate Dissertation on the Origin of Alphabetic Writing, "Orig. des Loix," t. i. l. ii. c. vi.; and a dissertation on Sanchoniatho, by the same author, annexed to the first volume of the same work.

informs us that they had made those settlements a short time after the Trojan war.

Sidon and ancient Tyre were among the most illustrious of the cities of antiquity. The latter owed its origin to a colony of the former, and does not seem to have existed in the days of Homer, who makes frequent mention of Sidon, but says nothing of Tyre. In the book of Joshua, Sidon is denominated *the great;* and the triumph of the Israelites, under that illustrious leader, which dispersed the Sidonians, was probably the occasion of their founding the city of Tyre, and transplanting themselves likewise into distant colonies. Among these, the most illustrious was Carthage, which came afterward to be the most formidable rival of the Roman power; and which, of all the nations whom they finally subdued and overwhelmed, was the only one which had seriously threatened their own destruction.

Carthage was founded by Dido, the daughter of Belus, king of Tyre, 869 years before Christ, and 117 before the foundation of Rome by Romulus. The outlines of its history we shall afterward briefly consider, when, in the course of the Roman history, we come to treat of the Punic wars.

Ancient Tyre seems to have risen to very great splendour within a short time from its foundation, and to have surpassed its parent state in opulence and extensive commerce. From the writings of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the other prophets, we must judge that it was in their time one of the greatest and wealthiest cities of the universe;* and the profane historians accord in this respect with the sacred. Its prosperity, however, was of no long duration. The city was besieged in the year 580 before Christ, by

* Isaiah wrote 768 years B. C., Jeremiah about 200 years afterward; Ezekiel prophesied about 595 B. C. See Ezek. c. xxvii. and xxviii., where the wealth and commerce of Tyre are characterized in very glowing colours, and the particulars of its trade and manufactures minutely specified.

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and after a most obstinate resistance was taken in the thirteenth year of the siege and utterly destroyed by the conqueror. The greatest part of the inhabitants had saved themselves by flight during this protracted war; and they built afterward the city of New Tyre on an island at no great distance from the site of the ancient; a city which rivalled the former in magnitude and splendour, and the capture of which, by Alexander the Great (332 B. C.), after a siege of seven months, was one of the most brilliant exploits of that mighty conqueror.

The Tyrians were extremely industrious in the practice of many of the useful arts. They carried the working of metals to great perfection. The magnificence of the temple of Hercules at Tyre is celebrated by Herodotus (l. ii., cap. xliv.), who saw it, and who was particularly struck with two columns, one of molten gold and the other of emerald, which in the nighttime shone with great splendour. The latter was probably of coloured glass, as we have the authority of Pliny for attributing to the Phœnicians the invention of the making of glass; and M. Goguet conjectures, with some plausibility, that the column was hollow, and was lighted by a lamp put within it. The Tyrian purple is celebrated by all the ancient authors. The colour was the pure juice of a particular kind of shell-fish, and being produced in very small quantities, came thence to be of great value. The moderns are not unacquainted with the fish, but make no use of it, as a richer colour is produced at much less expense from the cochineal insect.

The Tyrian merchants were probably the first who imported to the Mediterranean, and thence into Europe, the commodities of India. They wrested from the Idumeans some commodious ports upon the Arabian Gulf, from which they had a regular intercourse with India; and having occupied Rhinocorara in the Lower Egypt, which is the nearest port in the Mediterranean to the Arabian Gulf, they had a short and

commodious land carriage for their Indian merchandise, till it was thence reshipped and conveyed to Tyre.*

CHAPTER VI.

THE GRECIAN HISTORY—Earliest period of the History of Greece—The Titans—Cecrops—Chronicle of Paros—Areopagus—Deluge of Deucalion—Council of the Amphictyons—Cadmus—Introduction of Letters.

THE history of Greece presents to an inquisitive mind a various and most instructive field of speculation; and happily, from that period when its annals become truly important, its history has been written by very able authors. The early antiquities of this country are, it is true, so disguised with fables, that it is extremely difficult to discover the truth. Yet, in order to understand and profit by the classical writers, especially the poets, it is necessary to have some acquaintance even with those fables; and we know with considerable precision the period when they cease to mix themselves with facts, and when authentic history commences.

This respectable people was not free from the common vanity of nations, of attributing to itself a measure of antiquity far beyond all bounds of probability. The Athenians indeed, in terming themselves Αυτοχθονες, seemed to claim for their own nation an antiquity coeval with the formation of the earth; which was just as allowable as the boast of the Arcadians that they were προσεληνοι, or *older than the moon.* But whatever was the origin of the ancient inhabitants of this country, it is certain, that till civilized in some

* See a clear and rational account of the origin of the trade between Egypt, Arabia, and India, in Bruce's Travels, b. ii. ch. i.

measure by colonies of the Eastern nations who settled among them, they were in a state of the rudest barbarism. The aboriginal Greeks, under their various denominations of Pelasgi, Aones, Iliantes, Leleges, &c. were a race of savages who dwelt in caverns, and are said to have been so barbarous, as to live without any subordination to a chief or leader, to have fed on human flesh, and to have been ignorant of the use of fire. The most ancient colony from the East that are said to have established themselves among these barbarians are the Titans, a band of adventurers from Phœnicia or the adjoining coasts, who are generally supposed to have come thither about the time of Abraham. We have already seen that the Phœnicians were at this time a commercial people, trading to all the coasts of the Mediterranean; but it is evident that no views of commerce could have been their inducement to settle among a race of savages. It seems therefore probable that the fertility of the country had attracted those strangers thither, and that, availing themselves of those advantages which their superior knowledge and improvements gave them over the rude inhabitants, they, partly by policy, and partly by conquest, made themselves masters of the country. At all events it is universally allowed that from the period of those strangers settling among them, the Greeks assumed a new character, and exhibited in some respects the manners of a civilized nation. The dawnings of a national religion began to appear; for the Titans were a religious people. They taught the savages to worship the Phœnician gods, Ouranos, Saturn, Jupiter, &c., who were nothing more than deified heroes; and by a progress of ideas not unnatural, this rude people confounded in aftertimes those gods with the Titans who introduced them. The feats and achievements of the Titans, and those wars which had taken place among them, were believed to have been the exploits and wars of the gods. Hence sprung the greatest part of the Greek mythology,

and the numberless fables regarding their gods and demi-gods.

The Titans seem to have been a turbulent people: they weakened themselves by their incessant quarrels and hostile conflicts, and at length entirely extirpated each other. The last of the race was Inachus, who is looked upon as the founder of the kingdom of Argos. The city of Argos was built 1856 B. C. by his son Phoroneous, and the kingdom of Sicyon founded by another of them. Contemporary with him was Ogyges, king of Attica, in whose time, about 1796 B. C., is said to have happened that remarkable inundation which goes by the name of the Deluge of Ogyges. As from the time of Ogyges to that of Cecrops there is no series recorded of the kings of Attica, nor any connected history of that period—this chasm in the annals of the nation has been by some writers ascribed to the ravages of that deluge, by which it is said the country was depopulated, and lay waste for above two centuries; but this fact is not supported by any proofs, while on the other hand, the best-informed authors regard the deluge of Ogyges as nothing more than a partial inundation from an extraordinary overflowing of the lake Copais in Bœotia, which overspread but a part of the low country, while the rest continued to be inhabited.

This emergence of the Greeks from barbarism, which they owed to the Titans, was only of very short duration. They soon relapsed into their former savage state; a circumstance which accounts, without the aid of a deluge, for the total silence of this people for a period of 200 years, till they were again illuminated by another colony of strangers from the Eastern shores of the Mediterranean. At the head of this second colony was Cecrops, who above 1582 years B. C. is supposed to have landed in Attica, where there was a species of government under Acteus, but so feebly enforced, that the whole country was the prey of pirates and robbers. It was pillaged on the land side by the Œones, a people of Bœotia, and by the Carians on the

quarter of the sea. Cecrops marrying the daughter of Acteus, succeeded to the sovereignty, and taught his subjects the most effectual way of resisting those violences, by associating together in small communities, and thus uniting their strength. He built several cities in Attica, and is celebrated as an able politician and legislator. Cities we may suppose were, at this time, a collection of huts like an Indian village; and political regulations extended no further than to enforce obedience to the chief, and union among the tribe; to define property, and to give it some small degree of security.

Dark and uncertain as the history of Greece is at this period, we must observe that it begins to have a degree of authenticity from a very singular and venerable monument of antiquity, the Chronicle of Paros, which is preserved among the collection of marbles brought from Smyrna by the Earl of Arundel, and now the property of the University of Oxford.

This Chronicle of Paros contains a precious memorial of history and of chronology, and fixes the eras of many facts left uncertain by the Greek writers. Not, however, that it can be pretended that there arises from this chronicle the same certainty that would arise from particular records coeval with the facts; for this monument is only the testimony of an author relating facts which had happened many ages before his own time. But, in the first place, he is a very ancient author; and, secondly, his chronicle being recorded on marble, it is probable that it was cut by public authority, and upon the evidence of anterior monuments. A proof of its antiquity arises from the circumstance of the dates being marked by a very ancient method of numeration, which Herodian mentions as being in use among the Greeks in the early ages. The numerical letters, instead of proceeding in the order of the alphabet, are the first letters of the numerical word; as Π for Πεντε, five; Δ for Δεκα, ten—&c. An argument of the veracity and authenticity of the chronicle arises from this circum-

stance, that in the whole course of events there recorded, there is no particular which has the air of fiction. It was the poets only who intermixed history with fable; the genuine monuments of history seem to have been preserved pure and unadulterated, making allowance only for what the credulity of rude and ignorant times might adopt for truth, and which increasing knowledge has rejected as fabulous. In this chronicle we have the era and duration of the siege of Troy, but none of the marvellous circumstances with which that event has been embellished by Homer. Mention is likewise made of Ceres, of Hercules, of Mars, and Neptune, but no fabulous exploits are recorded of them. A great deal of authority seems, therefore, deservedly due to this chronicle, which marks the dates of the principal events of the Grecian history from the reign of Cecrops down to the age of Alexander the Great. Time and accident have mutilated both the beginning and the end of this monument, from which, if entire, we might probably have learned both the precise time when it was constructed, and the evidence of anterior monuments from which the dates were taken; but of these important circumstances we must be content to remain in ignorance.

Resting then upon the authority of this venerable monument, we may credit all the principal facts which are recorded even in the earliest part of this period; while we receive with a proper degree of scepticism those circumstances detailed by the ancient writers which have the air of fable, and which are not to be found in this chronicle.

Cecrops died childless, and was succeeded by Cranaus, an Athenian, in whose time happened two remarkable events, both recorded in the Chronicle of Paros—the judgment of the court of Areopagus, between Mars and Neptune, two princes of Thessaly—and the Deluge of Deucalion.

Hallirothius, the son of Neptune, had violated Alcippe, the daughter of Mars, and her father put him

to death in revenge for the injury. To avoid a war which would have ensued between these princes on occasion of this quarrel, their difference was submitted to the judgment of the Areopagus, which decreed that the revenge of Mars was justified by the outrage which he had sustained. This celebrated tribunal had been instituted by Cecrops; and soon arose to such reputation, that strangers, and even the sovereigns of other countries, sometimes submitted their most important differences to its decision.

The number of its judges is variously reported by historians. Some writers have limited it to nine; others have enlarged it to thirty-one, and some to fifty-one: whence it is probable that the number has been different at different periods. They were chosen from among the wisest and most respectable of the citizens, and, in the latter times, consisted principally of such as had enjoyed the dignity of archons or chief magistrates. They held their meetings in the open air, upon an eminence in the middle of the city, and determined all causes during the night; for these two reasons, as Athenæus informs us, that neither the number nor the faces of the judges being known, there might be no attempts to corrupt them; and that, as they neither saw the plaintiff nor defendant, their decisions might be quite impartial. To these reasons the president Goguet adds a third, that as they sat in the open air, their proceedings would have been constantly embarrassed by the crowd which would perpetually have attended them, had they met in the daytime. Of the powers of this high tribunal, and the nature of its jurisdiction, I shall treat more particularly when I come to consider the constitution of the Athenian republic.

The other remarkable event which distinguished the age of Cranaus, the successor of Cecrops, was the deluge of Deucalion. There is no event more celebrated in antiquity than this remarkable inundation. Deucalion is feigned by the poets to have been the

restorer of the human race, and was in all probability the parent stock of a very numerous progeny in Greece. But the deluge which happened in his time was certainly nothing more than another partial inundation, like the deluge of Ogyges, caused by the overflowing of some of the Thessalian rivers, probably the Peneus. That this deluge was only partial is proved by this fact, that the succession of the sovereigns in the different states of Greece preceding the age of Deucalion is preserved, as well as the series of those who came after his time. History shows no chasm in the succession of the kings of Argos, Athens, or Sicyon, which must have taken place had the deluge been universal. The Chronicle of Paros gives its aid in confirmation of this idea; for it records that Deucalion, after escaping from the flood, retired to Athens, where he sacrificed to Jupiter Phryxius. The poets have embellished this event with a variety of circumstances extremely similar to those we find in the Mosaic accounts of the universal deluge; but this proves no more than that these authors had either seen the sacred writings, whence they had borrowed those circumstances, or else that the tradition of that great event being very generally diffused, they had applied its circumstances to an inundation which was merely topical, and long posterior to the other, though still a very ancient event with reference to the age in which those authors wrote. Those partial inundations were extremely common in Greece. Xenophon reckons no less than five of them, and Diodorus Siculus mentions a sixth, posterior to those enumerated by Xenophon.

Contemporary with Cranaus was Amphictyon, who reigned at Thermopylæ,—a prince of great and comprehensive views, if in reality Greece owed to him that excellent political institution of the council of the Amphictyons; but I should rather incline to be of another opinion. The state of Greece was at this time so rude, and the country broken into so many independent sovereignties, that we can hardly suppose

any single prince to have had sufficient influence to bring about a league of twelve states or cities with their dependencies, and to make them adopt one common interest. The institution was certainly ancient, but more probably owed its origin to some national emergency which made the northern districts of Greece sensible of the necessity of combining their power and uniting their interests. The name *Amphictiones*, accordingly to its original orthography, makes this conjecture, which is the notion of Suidas, more probable. It is more natural to suppose the council was so named as being *composed of deputies from all the cities around*, than that it took its appellation from a prince of the name of Amphictyon, of whose history we know nothing else than this alleged remarkable fact.

The states united in this general council were the Ionians, among whom were comprehended the Athenians; the Dorians; the Perhœbians; the Bœotians; Magnesians; Achæans; Pthians; Melians; Dolopians; Ænianians; Delphians; and Phocians. They met twice in the year at Thermopylæ, and afterward at Delphi; two deputies attending from each state; and in their deliberations and resolutions all were on a footing of equality. Limited at first to twelve separate republics, this council came afterward to include the whole of the Grecian states, according as the principal or leading republics acquired territories belonging to any of the Amphictyonic cities, and thus came to have a voice in the general council. Thus the Lacedæmonians becoming masters of the territory of Doris, had their deputies in this council, from which in their own right they were excluded. Hence the assembly of the Amphictyons, from being at first a partial league of twelve cities, became a convention of all the states of Greece. The deputies sent thither represented the body of the people, and had full powers to deliberate and to form resolutions on all that regarded the common interest of the combined states.* The

* The nature of the powers supposed to be resident in this

principle of this association cannot be sufficiently commended. It made all the leading men of the several states of Greece personally known to each other, and led to a communication of every sort of knowledge and improvement. It had a powerful effect in civilizing a rude nation, and repressing those petty feuds between its separate cantons, and that encroaching and predatory spirit so common in such a state of society, and so hostile to all advancement and general prosperity. Without some such bond of union, Greece, from the nature of its separate governments, could never have formed a considerable power in the scale of the nations of antiquity, nor ever have withstood the force of such formidable enemies as we shall see she had to encounter.

Contemporary with this real or fabulous Amphictyon was Cadmus, who, about 1519 years before the Christian era, is said to have imported from Phœnicia into Greece the art of alphabetic writing. The Phœnician alphabet, which is generally supposed to be the root of all the others, consisted only of sixteen letters, and the ancient Greeks had no more for many centuries

council, and the grievances against which it was intended chiefly to provide a remedy, may be gathered from the oath taken by the deputies, as we find it recorded in the oration of Æschines *de Fals. Legat.*:—"I swear that I will never subvert any Amphictyonic city; I will never stop the courses of their water, either in war or peace. If any such outrages should be attempted, I will oppose them by force of arms, and do my endeavours to destroy those cities which are guilty of such attempts. If any devastations be committed in the territory of Apollo, if any shall be privy to such offence, or entertain any design against the temple, I will use my hands, my feet, my whole force to bring the offender to just punishment." The latter part of the oath was intended as a guard upon the purity of the national religion; and this care was always understood to form a very important part of the function of the Amphictyonic council. This oath was guarded by the most dreadful curses and awful imprecations of vengeance upon any deputy who should violate the obligations which he thus came under.

afterward. Before the introduction of the Phœnician alphabet by Cadmus, it is probable that the Greeks used either the hieroglyphic mode, or the more ancient manner of expressing their ideas by rude pictures. The word [*graphein*] being used to signify either to *write* or to *paint*, countenances this supposition. After the introduction of the alphabetic mode, the Greeks wrote, not as afterward, constantly from left to right, but alternately from left to right and from right to left. This mode of writing, of which there are some specimens preserved among the Arundelian marbles at Oxford, was termed *Boustrophedon*, from its resemblance to the furrows described in ploughing a field.

With the art of writing, Cadmus brought likewise from Phœnicia a knowledge of all those arts and sciences which were practised and cultivated at this time in that early civilized country. The Greeks gradually advancing in improvement, and shaking off their original barbarism, begin, from this period, to figure as a united people, and to turn their thoughts, as we shall presently see, to ambitious and hazardous enterprises. But, before proceeding to notice these, I shall here take occasion to offer a few reflections on the short preceding sketch of the first and rudest period of the Grecian history.

CHAPTER VII.

Reflections on the first and rudest periods of the Grecian History--Extreme Barbarism of the Aborigines—Circumstances which retarded Civilization—Origin of the Greek Theology--Uncertainty of Mythological Researches—Superstitious Character of the Greeks—Oracles—Games—Effects of them on the National Character.

The topographical appearance of the country of Greece, when surveyed upon a map, presents to the view a large irregular peninsula, surrounded on the east, south, and west by the Mediterranean, which deeply indents its coasts, and divided internally by several large chains of mountains, which, with their lateral branches, form so many intersections, that the whole face of the country appears cut into a great number of small valleys, surrounded almost on every side by hills. Hence, while the coasts of the peninsula formed a multitude of bays and harbours, easily accessible to strangers who came thither with a view either to colonize or to make spoil, it must have been extremely difficult for those invaders to penetrate into the interior parts of the country; and troops of an enemy, after the conquest of one canton, would find fresh difficulties, and a war to recommence, at every step of their progress. From the same cause, the internal structure of the country, it would necessarily happen, that even after a colony of strangers had formed a permanent establishment, and begun to spread improvement and civilization around them, the progress of that civilization would be extremely slow. For the inhabitants of the different cantons living altogether detached, and feeling very few wants to incite to intercourse or to union, any improvement which they received would be partial, and very slowly communicated to their neighbouring provinces. The conformity, indeed, of the language of the Greeks, would seem to countenance the notion of their having free

communication and intercourse; but this general conformity may be accounted for from their having all the same origin; and if the original language was the same, it must, in such a state of barbarism, have long remained without much change, even though the different districts of the country had no intercourse with each other.

And here it may be remarked, that the admirable structure of the Greek language, highly complicated, yet at the same time wonderfully regular, and at once the most copious and most elegant of the known tongues, is of itself a proof of the truth of that tradition which attributes the first civilization of this people to a colony of strangers from one or other of the more polished countries of the East; for this language, such as we find it to have been in the days of Homer and of Hesiod, is a phenomenon altogether inconsistent with the state of society in which it is found, and with the rude and barbarous manners of the people who used it. It must, therefore, have been imported and taught to this people by the colony of a refined and polished nation among whom it had its birth.

That the ancient inhabitants of this peninsula were rude and uncultivated savages, is a fact which the moderns have no reasonable grounds for doubting, when we find it the uniform belief of the nation itself in all periods of its annals, and the common opinion of its best historians. "Who could imagine," says M. Goguet, "that that ingenious people to whom Europe is indebted for all its knowledge, were descended from savages who wandered in the woods and fields, without laws or leaders, having no other retreat but dens and caverns, ignorant even of the use of fire, and so barbarous as even to eat one another?" Why should we doubt of these facts, when we know for a truth that other nations, in times comparatively modern, were upon their first discovery found in a state equally barbarous? The inhabitants of the Marian Islands,

when they were discovered by Magellan in 1521 had, till that time, never seen fire, and expressed the utmost astonishment at it. They believed it to be an animal which fixed itself upon wood and feasted on it, and when approaching so near as to be touched they thought they were bit by it. The inhabitants of the Philippine and Canary Islands were, at their first discovery, in a state of equal ignorance. There are, it is true, but few countries in which lightning is not seen at times, and its effects perceived; but as those effects are always destructive, a savage would naturally regard the phenomenon with horror; and if a similar effect should by chance manifest itself from the collision of hard substances, he would not readily conceive that it could be turned to useful purposes; and, therefore, instead of preserving the fire, would naturally either endeavour to suppress and extinguish it, or, if he found that impracticable, would fly from it and leave it to its ravages.

That the ancient inhabitants of Greece were *anthropophagi* (cannibals) is no more incredible, than that there are savage tribes at this day in Asia, Africa, and America, who make a common practice of feeding on human flesh.* We think of this with horror, and execrate the idea as shocking and unnatural. We, who do not know what it is to want the supplies of a vast variety of aliment, study to excite the satiated appetite by skilful combinations and ingenious refinements of cookery: but we should judge more impartially, if, while we thought of those bloody repasts, we took likewise into view the niggardly provision which nature in many regions of the earth has made

* The New Zealanders, beyond doubt, are cannibals.—See *Hawkesworth and Cook's last Voyage in* 1777. They eat, however, only their enemies, and expressed great abhorrence when asked if they ate their friends who had been killed.—[See also Earle's *Residence in New Zealand*, 1833—Ellis's *Polynesian Researches*, 1829—and Sir Stamford Raffles *on Java*.]

for man; the barren deserts which he inhabits, the climate which often locks up or annihilates their scanty produce, and the dreadful extremities to which even civilized man has been known to proceed for the support of life. Necessity only, in the most savage nations would at first get the better of the strongest instinct, but that once overcome, a habit is soon acquired, and will not be laid aside as long as subsistence remains in any degree precarious.

In a nation so barbarous as we must believe Greece to have been at this period, there was many circumstances which retarded the advances to refinement.

The Titans, the first colony of strangers from the East, might have introduced a degree of civilization, but it could be only temporary. They taught the Greeks agriculture; but the continual wars in which they were engaged among themselves rendered the improvement of the country quite impracticable, for no man had any security for reaping the fruits of his labour. These strangers were exterminated, and Greece, in a few years, relapsed into her original barbarism. The second and third colonies from the East founded a few cities, then termed kingdoms; for every city was a separate state, and we may form a judgment of the nature of these states from this circumstance, that at the time of Cecrops, when Attica consisted of twelve separate states or cities, the inhabitants of the whole district amounted only to 20,000.

The detached situation of the Greeks, of which we have already taken notice, and the natural barriers between the different cantons, gave to the inhabitants a certain spirit of independence, which, even after the foundation of a political union, would very much resist all attempts toward the establishment of general laws, and, consequently, afford the greatest obstacles to general civilization. One powerful engine, best fitted to overcome these obstacles, was the introduction of a national religion, which Greece, as we have already observed, owed to those eastern colonies.

It is a very just remark of an ingenious historian,* that the theology of any country is an indication of the state of manners when that system was first formed. "By knowing the adventures and attributes of any false deity, we can pronounce with some certainty what must have been the state of society and manners when he was elevated to that dignity. The mythology of Greece plainly indicates the character of the age in which it was formed. It must have been in times of the greatest licentiousness, anarchy, and violence, that divinities of the highest rank could be supposed capable of perpetrating actions, or of being influenced by passions, which, in more enlightened periods, would be deemed a disgrace to human nature: it must have been when the earth was still infested with destructive monsters, and mankind, under forms of government too feeble to afford them protection, were exposed to the depredations of lawless robbers, or the cruelty of savage oppressors, that the well-known labours of Hercules, by which he was raised from earth to heaven, could have been necessary, or would have been deemed highly meritorious."

What was the original worship of the ancient inhabitants of this country we are entirely at a loss to know; but barbarous as they were, they probably had some notions of religion, and receiving from strangers a new system of theology, of which at first their ideas must have been very confused, they would naturally graft the one upon the other; as we know that in modern times several savage nations have done in blending their own idolatries with the tenets of Christianity. Hence if we still trace the gods of the Phœnicians and of the Egyptians in those of the Greeks, with respect to the great characterizing circumstances of their powers and attributes, it is a very fruitless labour which some learned men have undertaken in attempting to prove a coincidence in all the minute particulars of

* Robertson's Historical Disquisition concerning India, Appendix, p. 317.

their fabulous lives, exploits, and metamorphoses. I know of no subject which has afforded so much disquisition, or so many opposite opinions, as the attempts that have been made to reconcile the mythologies of different nations, or to trace up all the absurd fables of ancient pagan theologies to one common origin. It would be idle to enter deeply into a subject of this nature; yet I think it of consequence to take notice at least of one theory or system with regard to the origin of the pagan mythologies which some very good men have adopted, from a mistaken zeal in the cause of religion. Some of these authors, with wonderful learning, but with much indiscretion, have attempted to show that most of the fables regarding the heathen deities and their illustrious exploits derive their origin from the sacred scriptures, and are nothing else than the lives and actions of the first patriarchs vitiated and disguised in passing by tradition to barbarous and unenlightened nations. Thus the learned Bochart finds out the patriarch Noah in the pagan Saturn, his son Shem in Pluto, Ham in Jupiter Ammon, and Japhet in Neptune.* Moses alone is said to have furnished the idea of Apollo, Æsculapius, Priapus, Prometheus, Tiresias, Proteus, Typhon, Perseus, Orpheus, Janus, Adonis; because certain fabulous exploits attributed to those deities and heroes bear a resemblance to some of the actions of the Jewish legislator. In like manner they have found all the heathen goddesses in Zipporah the wife, or in Miriam the sister, of Moses. One of these learned authors has published a book which he calls *Homer Hebraizing*, in which he alleges that the Iliad and Odyssey are nothing else than a history of the illustrious characters in scripture under borrowed names. This fondness for reducing all history of remote antiquity to the sacred scriptures, and of making the inspired volumes furnish theology

* Bochart, Thomassin, Cumberland, Vossius, Huet, Fourmont, &c.

not only to the Jews, but to all the heathen nations, is of very pernicious consequence; for what indeed else is it to say, than that the sacred oracles designed to instruct mankind in their highest interests and the concerns of their eternal welfare, have of ... in most nations, the wildest and most monstrous, ... which are destructive even of morality, ... made to vice instead of virtue?

The extreme uncertainty of all mythological explanations of the ancient fables is best evinced by comparing together the different solutions which men of ingenuity have given of the same fable. This, no doubt is a digression; but nothing is useless which illustrates the history of the human mind. The story of Proteus feeding his sea-calves upon the beach, and counting them at noon, with the extraordinary faculty he had of varying his shape, is explained by the Abbé Banier into an historical fact of a king of Egypt of that name, who is said to have lived about the time of the war of Troy; "a wise and crafty prince," says Banier, "whose cautious temper, guarding him against all dangers, might well pass for the gift of prophecy which is ascribed to him. As it must have been extremely difficult to learn his secrets, there was no impropriety in saying that it was impossible to come at the knowledge of them but by binding him. He was, besides, exceedingly stately, and seldom appeared in public, unless about noon to review his soldiers, which the poets have called counting his flock: and as his subjects, the Egyptians, lived upon the seacoasts, they were very properly termed sea-calves." Such is the account of Proteus by the Abbé Banier, which, it must be owned, is much less extravagant than many of his explanations. It were easy to contrast this with at least half a dozen different explanations of the same fable by other mythologists, all of them opposite to each other, all equally plausible, or, as some perhaps may think, equally absurd. But I shall content myself here with giving one other explanation of the same fable, by a

genius of a superior order, I mean my Lord Bacon, a man whose vigour of imagination was perhaps his most eminent talent; and which, though in general it was under the chastisement of a most solid judgment, seems at times to have eluded the watchfulness of its monitor, and to have escaped into the regions of extravagance. He, too, was fond of discovering in the ancient mythology a great deal of mysterious and secret wisdom; but his meanings lie for the most part so very deep, that it is extremely improbable they should ever have occurred to any but himself, much less to those who devised the fables.

The fable of Proteus, says Lord Bacon, seems to point at the secrets of nature, and the various states of *matter*. "Proteus, an old man, signifies matter, the most ancient of all things after God himself, which resides as in a cave, under the vast concavity of the heavens. He is represented as the servant of Neptune, because the various operations and modifications of matter are wrought chiefly while it is in a fluid state. The herd or flock of Proteus seems to mean nothing else than the several kinds of animals, plants, and minerals, in which matter appears to diffuse and spend itself: so that, after having formed these several species, and as it were finished its task, it seems to repose, as Proteus, after counting his flock, is feigned to go to sleep. But Proteus, when any attempts are made to bind him, is said to have changed into many different shapes: so matter, if any skilful artist should apply force, and torture it in order to its annihilation, will change and transform itself into a strange variety of shapes and appearances, but nothing less than the power of the Creator can annihilate or truly destroy it. So, at length, running through the whole circle of transformations, and completing its period, it in some degree restores itself, if the force be continued. The prophetical spirit of Proteus agrees excellently with the nature of matter; for he who knows the properties, the changes, and the processes of matter, must of

necessity understand the effects and sum of what it does, has done, and can do; though his knowledge extend not to all the parts and particulars thereof."

Such is the solution of the fable of Proteus by Lord Bacon: upon which I shall only remark, that if this fable had any hidden meaning whatever, it is highly improbable that it should have been such as could have occurred to no other but a man possessed of similar talents to those of its interpreter, a great philosophical genius, guided at times by an extravagant imagination.* The extreme subtilty and refinement of his solution must convince us at least that the parable could never have answered the end of instruction, which Lord Bacon himself supposes to have been the chief use and purpose of those ancient allegories. To dismiss the subject of mythology, I shall only observe, that researches of this kind, however ingenious, however they may exercise and amuse the imagination, are extremely fruitless. No subject requires more acquaintance with history, or demands more labour and research. But the annals of history are ransacked to very little purpose if we establish it for a principle that every extravagant whim or absurdity that was current in any age or nation must have had some foundation in reason. The more we are acquainted with the human mind, the more we shall perceive its weaknesses, its prejudices, its caprices, and its follies.

To return from this digression—the great engine of the civilization of the Greeks was the introduction of a national religion by those eastern colonies; and, inspired with the enthusiasm of all new converts, it is no wonder that superstition was at this time their predominant characteristic. To this age, therefore, and to this character of the people, we must refer the origin of the Grecian oracles, and the institution of the public games in honour of the gods.

* Balzac says, humorously, "Let us believe then, out of respect to Chancellor Bacon, that all the follies of the ancients are wise, and all their dreams mysteries."

With a rude and unenlightened people there is no passion more strong than the desire of penetrating into futurity. It would seem that the less the human mind is aided by experience, or enabled from extensive knowledge to form probable conjectures of the future from the past, the more it is apt to wish for and to believe the possibility of some secret art or method of obtaining such anticipatory views. All barbarous nations have their augurs, their sorcerers, or their oracles. The Canadian savages have, in every tribe a few crafty impostors, who pretend to foretell future events by visions which they have in their sleep, and who are thence termed *dreamers*. When the tribe marches to war, these dreamers constantly attend in the rear of the troop, and no measure is ventured upon till they are consulted. The African negroes have their *Obi* men and women, who deal in charms and incantations, and are firmly believed to have the power of dispensing good and evil fortune at their pleasure. The sorceries of the Laplander are well known; and the second-sight of the Scottish highlanders: all from the same source, ignorance and superstition.

A cavern at the foot of Mount Parnassus, near Delphi, was remarkable for exhaling a mephitic vapour; which, like that of the Grotto del Cani in Italy, had the effect of stupefying and slightly convulsing any person who came within its atmosphere. Some ingenious men had the address to turn this natural phenomenon to their own advantage and the profit of the neighbourhood. A temple was built on the spot to Apollo, the god of divination. A priestess was procured, whom habit soon enabled to undergo the experiment without danger; the raving expressions which the priests probably instructed her to utter, and which they interpreted as they thought fit, were received by the people as oracles; and her visible convulsions gave ample testimony to their being the effect of inspiration. A hollow oak in the forest of Dodona, in which it was possible for a man to conceal himself, while the aperture was

artfully closed up, was likewise famous for its oracles, and the imposture was no doubt equally beneficial to its priests and attendants. These were commonly men of some art, who had ingenuity enough to frame equivocal answers to the questions that were put to them: and if the inquirer gave such construction to the response as was most agreeable to himself it was generally possible for the priests to construed according to the event. Strange! that men should ever believe that if the Deity should stoop to hold intercourse with his creatures, he would use the mean tricks and subterfuges of a juggler.

Yet these oracles of the Greeks were for many ages in high reputation, and had extensive political consequence. One of the causes which have been assigned for the high reputation of the Amphictyonic Council, and the removal of its seat from Thermopylæ to Delphi, was the interest which the northern states of Greece had in maintaining the veneration for the Delphian oracle, and the preservation of the riches of its temple, with which this council was particularly intrusted. A more remarkable consequence was the institution of the *public games* of the Greeks. The concourse of people to the oracles upon particular occasions (for it was only at stated periods that they were accessible) naturally led to the celebration of a festival and to public games, which, as a religious motive first occasioned their celebration, began soon to be considered as a part of religion.

The celebration of public games was of very high antiquity among the Greeks. Homer makes no mention of the Olympian, or of any other of those which were called the sacred games; but is very ample in the account of the games celebrated in honour of the dead, in his account of the funeral of Patroclus, and describes minutely the several contests of chariot-races, foot-races, boxes, wrestling, throwing the quoit, launching the javelin, shooting with the bow, and fencing with

the spear.* These games seem to have borne a considerable resemblance to the Gothic tournaments. The prizes were of considerable value—a female captive, a war-horse, golden goblets, spears, &c. These we shall see in aftertimes gave place to such rewards as were purely honorary.

The four public, or solemn games of the Greeks, which were particularly termed ieroi or sacred, were the Olympic, the Pythian, the Nemæan, and the Isthmian. The precise eras when those games were first instituted are extremely uncertain, as well as the persons to whom they owed their origin. With regard to both these points Archbishop Potter, in his *Archæologia Græca*, has collected all the different opinions. The Olympic games, which were celebrated at Olympia in the territory of Elis, were held every four years, or rather every fiftieth month, or the second month after the completion of four years. And hence have arisen the seeming chronological discordances, when events have been computed both by years and by olympiads; for it has been customary to allow four precise years to an olympiad instead of fifty months. The Greeks did not begin to compute the time by olympiads, from the period when those games were first instituted. They had even subsisted some centuries before they began to reckon by them; and the first olympiad, according to Usher's chronology, begins only 776 years before the Christian era, 29 years before the Babylonian era of Nabonassar, and 149 before the building of Rome.

The amusements of the people in all these public games were of the same nature, and consisted principally in viewing contests of skill in all the athletic exercises. The prizes bestowed on the victors were not rewards of any intrinsic value, as those given at the ancient funeral games; they were originally of the most simple nature. A crown of wild olive or of parsley

* Iliad, 23.

was accounted the highest reward in the times of virtuous simplicity, when glory was a sufficient incitement to excellence without the sordid allurements of interest; and so powerful is habit in its influence on the mind, that even in the latter ages of Greece, when luxury had introduced corruption of every kind, the victors in those games had no other reward than a garland of leaves. In a political view, these public games were, during the first ages of their institution, of the most important consequence. Independently of their effect in promoting in the youth a hardy and vigorous conformation of body, and that activity and address in martial exercises and in single combat, which, according to the ancient system of war, were of the utmost importance, a most beneficial consequenee of those public games was the frequent assembling together of the inhabitants of all the states of Greece, and thus promoting a national union; to which the difference of their governments, and their separate interests, were otherwise opposing a constant resistance. Assembled on these public occasions from motives of pleasure and amusement, to which was joined the notion of performing a duty of religion, and indulging in every species of festivity, they could not avoid considering each other as brethren and fellow-citizens. Whatever were the political interferences of the several states, or their national animosities, every grudge of this kind was at least for the time obliterated. Thucydides informs us that all hostile operations between states actually at war were suspended during the performance of those solemnities. Another consequence of those meetings was the dissemination of knowledge, arts, science, and literature; for it must be observed, that although the chief contests in the sacred games were those in the martial and athletic exercises, there were likewise trials of skill in poetry, history, and music; and it is chiefly to these latter exercises of genius that we must attribute the eminence of the Greeks in those sciences above all the nations of antiquity.

CHAPTER VIII.

Early period of the Greek history continued—Earliest state of agriculture in Greece—Erectheus institutes the Eleusinian Mysteries—Obtains the sovereignty of Attica—Theseus unites the cities of Attica—This the age of the marvellous—End of that period—Expedition of the Argonauts—Course of their voyage—The solstitial and equinoctial points fixed by Chiron—This the foundation of Sir Isaac Newton's chronology—Two-fold proof on which it rests—Progress of maritime affairs in Greece—State of the military art—War of Thebes—War of the *Epigonoi*—War of Troy—Ancient system of warfare—The tactic arrangement of their troops—Subsistence of the armies—Arms—The war of the *Heraclidæ*—Change of government in Greece—Commence- of the democracy of Athens—Origin of the Greek colonies—Causes of their rapid advancement.

From the period of the arrival of the first of those eastern colonies which formed establishments in Greece, down to the era of the war of Troy, is an interval of above 300 years, in which the Greeks were gradually shaking off their original barbarism, and advancing in civilization and the knowledge of the arts of life. This whole space of time, however, is accounted the fabulous period of the Grecian history. Not that it contains no facts of which the authenticity can be relied on, but that it abounds with many, which with a basis of truth have served as the foundation for an immense superstructure of fable. Part of the history of this period I have given in the preceding chapter, in which I have shortly traced the progress of the Greeks from their most barbarous state down to the introduction of letters into Greece by Cadmus. I shall now throw together such facts as are tolerably well authenticated, and may be relied on as the great outlines of the history of what remains of that doubtful period down to the Trojan war. From that era, when it is generally allowed that fiction ceases to mix itself with authentic history, we shall proceed with a greater degree of light, and find the objects of our

study gradually rising upon us in point of importance. Greece, which is not naturally a fertile country, nourishing only a few inhabitants, and these seeking their sustenance like other savages, from the woods and mountains, did not begin to practise agriculture till about 150 years after the time of Cecrops. At this time Erectheus, either a Greek who had sailed to Egypt, or the leader of a new colony of Egyptians, is said to have introduced agriculture into Attica, and to have relieved that country, then suffering from famine, by the importation of a large quantity of Egyptian grain. The only produce of the native soil at this time was the olive, which served as a very nourishing food, but of which the various uses were then so little known that it has been doubted if, even in the days of Homer, the Greeks used oil for the purpose of giving light. It is certain that this great poet, who is abundantly minute in describing every circumstance of domestic life never mentions oil as applied to that purpose.*

Erectheus, called by the latter Greeks Ericthonius, is said to have cultivated the plains of Eleusis, then a barren waste, and to have instituted, in honour of Ceres, the Eleusinian Mysteries, in imitation of the Egyptian games of Isis. Ceres is famed to have come herself into Greece at this period; and the poets have recorded many prodigies of her performance. As to the precise nature of those Eleusinian mysteries, the moderns can only form conjectures, since, even among the ancients, they were kept an inviolable secret from all but those who were initiated. They certainly were of a religious, and even of a moral nature; since we find the wisest among the ancients expressing themselves with regard to them in strains of the highest encomium. Cicero, speaking of them, says,

* Their apartments were lighted only by fires, and in the palaces of princes, odoriferous wood was employed for that purpose.---Odyss. v. 50; Ibid. v. 306. They likewise used torches of pine and resinous woods.---Odyss. xviii. 309.

(De Leg. l. 2,) "Among many other advantages which we have derived from Athens, this is the greatest; for it has improved a rude and barbarous people, instructed us in the art of a civilized life, and has not only taught us to live cheerfully, but to die in peace in the hope of a more happy futurity." For a very learned conjectural explanation of those mysteries, we refer the reader to Bishop Warburton's *Divine Legation of Moses;* and many curious particulars regarding the actual ceremonies performed in those sacred solemnities are enumerated by Mr. Cumberland in his *Observer*, a work which contains a great deal of valuable research on various topics of the antiquities and literature of the Greeks.*

*According to Mr. Cumberland, the Eleusinian mysteries were celebrated in the time of Autumn, every fifth year, at Eleusis, where a great concourse of people met on the occasion. The ceremonies of initiation were preceded by sacrifices, prayers and ablutions. The candidates were exercised in trials of secrecy, and prepared by vows of continence; every circumstance was contrived to render the act as awful and striking as possible; the initiation was performed at midnight, and the candidate was taken into an interior sacristy of the temple, with a myrtle garland on his head; here he was examined, if he had duly performed his stated ablutions; clean hands, a pure heart, and a native proficiency in the Greek tongue, were indispensable requisites. Having passed this examination, he was admitted into the temple, which was an edifice of immense magnitude: after proclamation made that the strictest silence should be observed, the officiating priest took out the sacred volumes containing the mysteries; these books were written in a strange character, interspersed with figures of animals, and various emblems and hieroglyphics; they were preserved in a cavity between two large blocks of stone, closely fitted to each other, and they were carefully replaced by the priest with much solemnity, after he had explained what was necessary to the initiated out of them. The initiated were enjoined to honour their parents, to reverence the immortal gods, and abstain from particular sorts of diet, particularly tame fowls, fish, beans, and certain sorts of apples.

When this was finished the priests began to play off the whole machinery of the temple, in all its terror; doleful groans

The services of Erectheus were rewarded by his obtaining the sovereignty of Attica, which from that time began to advance in civilization; and in the succeeding age, during the reign of Theseus, the Greeks in general began to display an active and ambitious spirit, which signalized itself in some very extraordinary enterprises. Such were the expedition of the Argonauts under Jason; the war of Thebes, in which seven kings combined against Eteocles, its sovereign; and the war of Troy, which engaged all the states and princes of Greece.

Attica, before the time of Theseus, though under one sovereign, was divided into twelve detached states or cities, each governed by its own magistrates and laws. This prince laid the foundation of the grandeur of Attica, by uniting these twelve states, combining their interests, and throwing them into one peo-

and lamentations broke from the fane; thick and sudden darkness involved the temple, momentary gleams of light flashed forth every now and then, with tremblings, as if an earthquake had shaken the edifice; sometimes these coruscations continued long enough to discover all the splendour of the shrines and images, accompanied with voices in concert, dancings, and music; at other times, during the darkness, severities were exercised upon the initiated by persons unseen; they were dragged to the ground by the hair of their heads, and beaten and lashed with stripes, without knowing from whom the blows proceeded, or why they were inflicted. lightnings, and thunderings, and dreadful apparitions, were occasionally played off, with every invention to terrify and astonish: at length, upon a voice crying out some barbarous, unintelligible words, the ceremony was concluded, and the initiated dismissed. The garment which he wore upon this occasion was not to be laid aside while it would hang together, and the shreds were then to be dedicated at some shrine, as the tattered trophy of the due performance of the mysteries of Ceres. These mysteries were held in such general respect, that it afforded great cause of reproach against Socrates for having neglected his initiation. The vows of secrecy, and the penalties to be inflicted on their violation, were as binding as could possibly be devised.—*Cumberland's Observer*, Vol. v. No. 115.

ple. The separate magistracies were abolished, and the whole agreed to be governed by the same code of laws, in the framing of which the principal men of each state had an equal suffrage. Erectheus had divided the citizens into four classes: Theseus reduced them to three—the nobles, the labourers, and the artisans. As the two last were the most numerous and the most powerful, he balanced that inequality, by conferring on the first the sole regulation of all that regarded religion, the administration of justice, and public policy. But there were in this institution the seeds of future discord and faction; for it was in the power of an ambitious noble, by ingratiating himself with the inferior orders, to obtain such an ascendant as to regulate everything by his will; and, in fact, the constitution of Attica was at this time perpetually fluctuating, and the people for ever embroiled in civil commotions.

It is principally on the age of Theseus, that the Greeks have indulged their vein for the marvellous. Everything is supernatural, and every great man is either a god or a demigod. The most probable source of this I conceive to be, that the princes, who had then become really powerful, and exercised a high control over their subjects, taking advantage of the superstitious character of the times and of the people's credulity, assumed to themselves a divine origin, in order the better to support their new authority. Having at all times the priests under their influence, they could do this with great facility, by instituting religious rites in honour of their divine progenitors; and if they could thus prevail so far as to pass with their contemporaries for the offspring of the gods, it is no wonder that the succeeding ages should retain the same idea of them and decorate their lives and exploits with a thousand circumstances of fabulous embellishment.

But the taking of Troy is the era when the marvellous part of the Grecian history ceases all at once.

The reason appears to be this:—the absence of the kings and chiefs at this tedious siege involved the several states in great disorders. Many of these princes were slain, or perished by shipwreck; others were assassinated or deposed. The few who survived found everything in misery and confusion, the country ravaged, the people pillaged and oppressed. In this state of things, the mind, awake only to real calamities and sufferings, is little disposed to indulge itself in romantic and poetic fictions. The games which cherished that spirit were for many years interrupted, and when again renewed, the more enlightened character of the Greeks, and the decline of that superstitious turn of mind which disposes to the love of the marvellous, had drawn a distinct line of separation between fiction and authentic history.

But even in the latter part of the fabulous period, there are some events of which the great outlines are sufficiently authentic, and which, as strongly characteristic of the genius, spirit, and manners of the times, are too important to be passed over without some reflections. The expedition of the Argonauts, the sieges of Thebes and of Troy, are very singular enterprises in so rude a period of society.

The Greeks, among other arts which they learned from the Phœnicians, were indebted to them for that of navigation; and they had not been long in possession of this art before they put it in practice in a very bold experiment. The voyage of the Argonauts to Colchis was undertaken 1280 years before the Christian era, according to Usher's Chronology, and 937 according to that of Sir Isaac Newton; and, when all its circumstances are considered, was certainly a very remarkable enterprise. What was the real purpose of the voyage, is extremely difficult to be determined. The poets have feigned a variety of fabulous circumstances, both of the enterprise and of its object: but among the serious opinions of the best-informed writers, the most probable seems to be that of Eusta-

thius, who conjectures this voyage to have been both a military and a mercantile expedition. The object, in his opinion, was to open to the Greeks the commerce of the Euxine Sea, and to secure some establishments upon its Asiatic coasts. For these purposes a fleet and troops were necessary. The armament consisted of many ships, of which *Argo*, the largest, was 50 cubits, or 75 feet, in length; about the size of a modern vessel of 200 tuns' burden. A number of heroes from every quarter of Greece joined in the expedition—the fathers of those brave warriors who afterward distinguished themselves at the siege of Troy.

The Argonauts, under the command of Jason, set sail from the coast of Thessaly. Their expedition was lengthened by unfavourable weather, unskilful seamen, and the consequent necessity of keeping as near as possible to the coasts. The variety of adventures which they met with in touching at many different islands and ports in the course of their voyage, have furnished ample matter of poetical fiction, resting on a slender basis of truth. Apollonius Rhodius, in Greek, and Valerius Flaccus, in Latin heroics, have sung the exploits of the Argonauts with no mean powers of poetry. The outlines of their expedition may be very shortly detailed. From the isle of Lemnos, where they made some stay, they proceeded to Samothrace. Thence sailing round the Chersonesus, they entered the *Hellespont;* and keeping along the coast of Asia, touched at Cyzicus, and spent some time on the coast of Bithynia; thence they entered the Thracian Bosphorus, and proceeding onward through the Euxine, at length discovered Caucasus at its eastern extremity. This mountain was their landmark, which directed them to the port of Phasis near to Oea, then the chief city of Colchis, which was the ultimate object of their voyage. Following the Argonauts through this tract of sea, and coasting it as they must have done, it appears evident that they

performed a voyage of at least 440 leagues. Those who consider not the times and the circumstances in which the Greeks accomplished this navigation, have not perceived the boldness of the enterprise. These daring Greeks had been but recently taught the art of sailing, by the example of foreigners; it was their first attempt to put it in practice. They were utterly ignorant of navigation as a science; and they went to explore an extent of sea that was altogether unknown to them. Let us do those heroes justice, and freely acknowledge that the voyage of the Argonauts was a noble enterprise for the times in which it was executed.

Preparatory to this remarkable voyage, the Argonauts were furnished with instructions by Chiron the astronomer, who framed for their use a scheme of the constellations, giving a determined place to the solstitial and equinoctial points; the former in the 15th degrees of Cancer and Capricorn, and the latter in the 15th degrees of Aries and Libra. This recorded fact* has served as the basis of an emendation of the ancient chronology by Sir Isaac Newton, of which I shall here give a short account.

Sir Isaac Newton's amended chronology is built upon two separate species of proofs: *first*, on an estimate of the medium length of the generations of men, or of the lives of the kings taken in succession, which former chronologists had enlarged very much beyond the truth; secondly, on a calculation instituted from the regular precession of the equinoxes. As to the first mode of proof, it may be observed, that when we are accurately informed from history that a certain number of generations intervened, or a certain number of sovereigns reigned, between any two events, we are enabled to ascertain pretty nearly the length

* See, however, the reasons for questioning the authenticity of this fact in Goguet, t. ii. b. 3, sect. 2.

of that interval, provided we can fix upon a reasonable number of years as the medium length of the generations of man, or the reigns of a succession of princes: a medium or average which is to be formed from a comparison of the successions of the sovereigns in the authenticated periods of modern and ancient history.

Between the return of the Heraclidæ into Peloponnesus and the battle of Thermopylæ, the date of which last event is well ascertained, though the former is not, there reigned a succession of seventeen kings in the one branch of the sovereignty of Lacedæmon, and the same number in the other. Now, by comparing together a variety of authenticated successions of sovereigns in ancient and modern times, it is found that the medium duration of each reign is from eighteen to twenty years. The seventeen princes, therefore, who filled the interval above-mentioned, must, at the rate of twenty years for each sovereign, have reigned 340 years. These, computed backward from the sixth year of Xerxes, and allowing one or two years more for the war of the Heraclidæ, and the reign of Aristodemus, the father of Eurysthenes and Proclus, will place the return of the Heraclidæ into Peloponnesus, 159 years after the death of Solomon, and forty-six before the first olympiad, in which Chorabus was victor. Instead of this moderate estimate, which is founded on rational data, the ancient chronologists, and their followers among the moderns, have assigned a space of thirty-five or forty years to each sovereign, which is double the true average calculation, and have thus placed the return of the Heraclidæ 280 years farther back than its true date.

Mr. Hooke in his Roman History, has, upon these data, corrected the chronology of the Roman history under the kings; and has shown that the assignment of nineteen or twenty years to each of the seven kings, is more consistent with the series of events recorded in that period, than the ordinary computation given

by historians, which supposes each of those princes to have reigned at a medium thirty-five years. If, by the same moderate estimate, the succession of the kings who reigned at Alba be compared with that of the kings at Rome, this computation will fix the coming of Æneas into Italy, and the era of the siege of Troy, exactly at the period to which the estimate of generations in the Greek annals would assign those events.

The second mode of proof on which Sir Isaac Newton has built his emendation of the ancient chronology, and which gives great additional strength to the former, is that which is founded on the regular precession of the equinoxes. This precession is known, by a series of the most accurate observations, to be at the rate of one degree in seventy-two years; that is, the sun crosses the ecliptic so much more to the west every succeeding year, that at the end of seventy-two years his progress westward amounts to one degree; by which means it happens, that the places of the equinox are continually receding from the constellations in the middle of which they were originally found at the time of the earliest observations. Whenever, therefore, the situation of the equinoctial or solstitial points, or any appearance depending on them, is mentioned, it is easy to ascertain the time of any event with which such an appearance was connected: for we have only to observe how many degrees the equinoctial points were then distant from their present position, and to allow seventy-two years for each degree. If we can depend upon the historical fact that the astronomer Chiron found that the two colures cut the ecliptic exactly in the cardinal points, at the time of the Argonautic expedition, it was a fair inference of Sir Isaac Newton when he found, in the year 1689, that these colures cut the ecliptic at the distance of 1s 6° 29′ from their original position, and were then found to intersect it in ♉ 6° 29′, ♌ 6° 29′, and ♏ 6° 29′, ♒ 6° 29′, this advancement or precession being

known to go on at the rate of a degree in seventy-two years, the length of the intervening space must therefore have been exactly 2627 years; which fixes the Argonautic expedition to 928 B. C.

After this first successful experiment, we shall find the Greeks turn their attention more particularly to maritime affairs; and we may judge of their progress by the fleet which was assembled thirty-five years after the Argonautic expedition, for transporting the troops to the siege of Troy. Yet still it was not till the war with the Persians that the Greek marine became an object of serious importance. The naval victory of Salamis showed to what a height it had then attained. At this battle the united fleet of Athens and Sparta amounted to 380 sail; that of the Persians to no less than 1200. The size of these ships is not certainly known;* but there is one circumstance from which a conjecture may be formed: the port of *Piræus* at Athens was, according to the account of ancient writers, particularly Strabo, capable of containing 400 ships; but this harbour, in the opinion of Wheeler and other modern writers, could not easily contain above fifty of our middle-sized trading vessels.†

The state of the military art at the same period forms a pretty curious object of inquiry. The war of Thebes, and that of Troy, are remarkable events in the age of which we now treat, and are, therefore, proper criteria by which we may form a judgment of the state of that art at this time in Greece. The first wars mentioned in Grecian history deserve no particular attention: they were probably little else than predatory excursions of barbarous tribes, to ravage

* The ships of the Greeks, at the time of the war of Troy, had no keel, and only one mast, which was lowered upon the deck when the ship was in port.—*Goguet*, vol. ii. b. 4, c. iv.

† The largest ships mentioned by Homer are those of the Bœotians, which carried 120 men.—*Il.* l. 2.

the lands and carry off the flocks of their neighbours. The country, in those times, was open and defenceless; the towns a collection of rude huts, incapable of resisting assault, and unsecured by any regular enclosure or fortification. At the time of the siege of Thebes, the state of the country was extremely different; as we may judge from the preparations of the Argives, their dispositions to besiege the city, and the duration of the war.

Œdipus had two sons, Eteocles and Polynices, to whom jointly he bequeathed the sovereignty of Thebes. Instead of dividing the kingdom, they agreed to govern it year after year alternately. Eteocles, at the expiration of his term, refusing to resign, Polynices solicited the aid of Adrastus, king of Argos, who espoused his cause, engaged several of the princes of Greece to assist him, and marched against the Thebans with a powerful army. They retreated before the enemy, and betook themselves to their city, which Adrastus immediately took measures for assailing. This is the first siege mentioned in the Grecian history, whence we may suppose that the arts of attack, and the contrivances for defence, would be equally rude and unskilful. The only object of the besiegers was to blockade the city, to prevent the inhabitants from making sallies, and cutting off all succours from the surrounding country. For this purpose, as they knew not the art of drawing lines of circumvallation, they formed a large camp at a small distance from the city, as a security for the baggage and provisions of the army, and a retreat so fortified that they could defend themselves in it, in case of a repulse and attack on the part of the besieged. They then divided their army into different bodies, each of which had the charge of assaulting a particular gate or entry to the city. It does not appear that they ever attempted an escalade, or endeavoured to effect a breach in the walls; but contented themselves with directing their efforts against the gates alone. These they endeavoured to force, but

were as often beat back by a sally from the besieged, and forced to retreat to their camp, where they sustain a siege in their turn. In this way, it is not surprising that the seige of a large city was protracted for years. Thebes, after a long siege, gave no hopes of surrender; both parties became tired of the war, and it was at length agreed to terminate it by a single combat between the rival brothers, Eteocles and Polynices; an issue for the quarrels of sovereign princes, which the humane reader of history will often find reason to wish had been more frequently resorted to. The brothers fought under the walls of Thebes, and were both killed.

I cannot avoid here observing, that the ancients appear to have entertained, on some points, notions of morality, which to our apprehension seem very extraordinary. The conduct of Eteocles in defrauding his brother of his alternate right of sovereignty, admits, according to our notions of justice, of no apology. It was perfidious in the highest degree. Yet the Greek poets who have treated of this story, Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, all agree in condemning Polynices, whom they judge unworthy of the honours of sepulture, for having troubled the repose of his country by a war. Similar to this is the judgment of the same poets upon the character of Œdipus, who is held forth as an object of the just vengeance of the gods, and condemned for his crimes to Tartarus, because he ignorantly slew his father in a justifiable quarrel, and innocently married his mother whom he knew not. Such, likewise is their opinion of the criminality of Orestes, who was with difficulty acquitted by the Areopagus, and is feigned to be incessantly tormented by the Furies, for having revenged on his mother Clytemnestra and her adulterous gallant Ægisthus, the murder of his father Agamemnon. It is no apology to say, as some critics have done, that the poets chose those subjects where an innocent person is represented as the victim of heavenly vengeance, because

they gave greater exercise to the emotions of terror and pity. The poets, in reality, did not allow the innocence of those persons; on the contrary, they plainly condemn them as guilty, and justify their punishment.

The death of Eteocles and Polynices did not terminate the Theban war. It was renewed by Creon, their uncle, who, after a successful battle, having refused Adrastus leave to bury the dead, that prince implored the aid of the Athenians, then governed by Theseus, who, to avenge the cause of humanity, joined his forces to those of the Argives, and compelled Creon to enter into terms of peace. Some years after, the war broke out anew on the part of the Argives. The sons of those commanders who had fallen during the siege of Thebes determined to revenge the deaths of their fathers. This was termed the war of the *Epigonoi*, that is, the descendants or sons of the former. They were joined by the Messenians and Arcadians, Corinthians and Megareans. The particulars of this war it is needless to trace; it was of long duration. The Thebans lost a decisive battle on the banks of the river *Glissas:* they retreated into Thebes; the city was attacked, taken by storm, and entirely destroyed by the conquerors. Pausanias mentions an epic poem on the subject of this war, which some writers have ascribed to Homer. "I own," says Pausanias, "that, next to the Iliad and Odyssey, I have not seen a finer work." Unfortunately, it has not reached our days.

The detail of the war of Troy rests chiefly on the authority of Homer; whose work, though embellished with fiction, must not in its great outlines be refused the credit of a real history. The poet, it is true, lived, as is generally supposed, at some distance of time from the events which he relates; 168 years by the account of Herodotus; between two and three centuries in the opinion of other writers; but by the computation of Sir Isaac Newton, his birth is placed only 28 years

after the taking of Troy. But allowing him to have lived at a considerable interval of time from the events which he relates, it is agreed among the ancient writers that he followed the relations of other authors, whose works, though now lost, were known to the ancients, and esteemed of sufficient authority. Several of the principal events of the Trojan war are likewise authenticated by the Arundelian marbles. The Chronicle of Paros fixes both the commencement of the siege and its termination; the former in the thirteenth year of Menestheus, king of Athens, and the latter in the 22d year of the same prince. The latter date corresponds to the year 1184 B. C. according to Usher's Chronology, and 904 B. C. according to Sir Isaac Newton's.

The immediate cause of the war is generally allowed to have been the rape of Helen, the wife of Menelaus, by Paris, the son of Priam, king of Troy; although prior to that motive an animosity had subsisted between the Greeks and Trojans for many generations. It is not otherwise probable, that a quarrel which interested only Menelaus and his brother Agamemnon should have been readily espoused by all the princes of Greece. The preparations for this war are said to have occupied no less than ten years; a length of time which ought not to surprise us, when we consider that this was the first war in which the whole nation had engaged. We may therefore look upon this enterprise as a proper test to judge of the state of the military art at this period in Greece. The time of preparation was employed in uniting the forces of the different princes, and in equipping a fleet to transport them into Asia. The troops, when assembled, amounted, according to the estimate of Thucydides, to about 100,000 men. In a general assembly of the States held at Argos, or Mycenæ, the chief command was conferred on Agamemnon, king of Mycenæ, Sicyon, and Corinth; and all the princes of Greece engaged by oath to range themselves under

his banners, and to furnish their contingent of men and ships. The preparations on the part of the Trojans were equally formidable. Priam, whose territories were considerable, extending from the isle of Tenedos to Upper Phrygia, had raised all his power, and strengthened himself by the alliance of many of the princes of the lesser Asia.

The Greeks embarked at Aulis, opposite to Eubœa, and landed in Asia at the promontory of Sigœum. Their first operation, after beating back the enemy who opposed their landing, was to form a large camp at some distance from the city. The site of Troy is generally supposed to have been at the distance of four or five miles from the shore, at the foot of that ridge of mountains which goes under the name of Ida. The camp was close upon the sea-shore for the sake of the ships, which as usual were drawn upon the land, and enclosed within the ramparts of the camp; one line fronting the city and the other the sea; while the tents of the troops filled the intermediate space. Each petty nation or tribe of the Greeks had its separate quarter of the camp; which was fortified externally by a high mound of earth, flanked with wooden towers. These strong entrenchments were necessary to secure the invading army from the attacks of the enemy, who acted as often as they could upon the offensive, and frequently assaulted the camp. The fortifications of Troy consisted, in like manner, as is generally believed, of nothing more than a sloping wall of earth, flanked with wooden towers. The Greeks attempted to draw no lines of circumvallation, nor were any of those engines of war employed which came afterward into use in regular sieges. The chief object of the Greeks during the first nine years of the war was to ravage and plunder the country—thus cutting off the sources of supply—and attacking the Trojans whenever they made a sally for the purpose of foraging, or attempted to force the enemy's camp. The

detail of the chief events of this war is to be found in Homer, with a copious embellishment of fiction. The spirit of the Trojans forsook them upon the death of Hector. The city was taken soon after, either by storm or by surprise; and being set on fire during the night, was burnt to the ground, not a vestige of its ruins existing at the present day. The miserable Trojans perished either in the flames or by the sword of the Greeks, and their empire and name were extinguished for ever. About 80 years after the burning of Troy, a Grecian colony settled near to its site, and the rest of the kingdom formed part of the territory of the Lydians.

Nothing can show more clearly the rudeness of the military art, at this remote period of time, than the instances of those two remarkable sieges of Thebes and of Troy. An open war was nothing else than a series of plundering expeditions. When a city was to be attacked, the country around it was ravaged, and the inhabitants reduced, if possible, to the necessity of a surrender from the want of provisions. If its resources were considerable, while the state of the country at the same time denied supplies to the besiegers, the enterprise must have been abandoned, unless it succeeded by a stratagem, or the city was betrayed by some of its inhabitants. If at length it was won, it was never attempted to preserve the conquest by a garrison: the advantage gained was usually secured by burning the city to the ground. As these military expeditions, seldom undertaken at a great distance from home, were commonly made during the spring and summer only, the troops during the winter remained at home inactive, and were usually disbanded. In a long-continued war at a distance, as that of Troy, the winter season was spent in the camp, and there was a complete cessation of hostilities. Dictys of Crete informs us, that the Greeks during the winter exercised themselves in a variety of games, which tended to relieve

the anxiety of the troops, and keep up the martial spirit. The game of chess is said to have been invented by Palamedes during this tedious siege.

With respect to the arrangement of the troops in order of battle, and the various military manoeuvres then in use among the Greeks, our ideas are extremely inperfect. Homer frequently mentions an order of battle under the term *phalanx*, but he gives us no description of it. We see, indeed, in one place, that Nestor places the cavalry or the chariots in front,* the infantry in the rear, and the weakest of the troops in the centre. In another place, we find the infantry in front, and the cavalry in the rear: this shows that they adopted a variety of arrangement according to circumstances. It is quite impossible from Homer's description to any distinct idea of the manoeuvres of the troops during an engagement. He gives us no plan of attack: we know not whether the armies charged in one body or in separate divisions. We see no evolutions, no rational movements of the troops during the action, nor any manoeuvre which shows conduct or skill on the part of the general. The chiefs or captains of the different bodies seem tohave fought equally with the private soldiers, and to be interested only who should kill most men. Horace's descriptions are all of single combats, man to man; long discourses and taunting reproaches between the heroes, ending in a desperate duel, without any regard to the situation of the main army. It appears from Homer's accounts that the Greeks, in rushing on to engagement, preserved a deep silence, while the Trojans,

* When cavalry or horse are mentioned, we are not to understand that in those armies there were regular bodies of horsemen. The horses were employed only in the drawing of cars or chariots, each usually containing two men, of whom one managed the horses and the other fought.—*Goguet*, t. ii. b. v. c. iii.

like most other barbarous nations, uttered hideous shouts at the moment of attack.

How those armies were subsisted it is not easy to say. It is certain that in those times the troops had no regular pay: they served at their own charges alone. The levies were made by a general law obliging each family to furnish a soldier, under a certain penalty. The only recompense for the service of individuals was their rated share of the booty; for none were allowed to plunder for themselves: everything was brought into a common stock, and the division was made by the chiefs, who had a large proportion for their share.

The arms of the troops were of different kinds. Their offensive weapons were the sword slung from the shoulder, the bow and arrows, the javelin, or short missile spear, the club, the hatchet, and the sling. Their weapons of defence were an enormous shield which defended almost the whole body, made of thin metal, and covered with the hide of some animal; a helmet of brass or copper, and a cuiras and buskins, with coverings for the thighs, of the same metal. It is proper to observe that iron, though known before this period, was a rare metal, and accounted of high value. Achilles proposed a ball of iron as one of the prizes in the funeral-games which he celebrated in honour of Patroclus.* It was not used in the fabrication of weapons of war. These were formed of copper hardened by an admixture of tin; and even in much later periods the Roman swords were of the same compound metal.

On this subject, the state of the military art at this period among the Greeks, the President Goguet has, in vol. ii., book v., c. iii., of his Origin of Laws, &c., collected a great mass of curious information, to which I beg leave to refer my readers. From all that can be gathered on the subject, it appears that this

* Iliad, I. 23.

art was yet extremely rude. But practice, which matures all arts, very soon reduced this into a system: and the Greeks in a very early period of their history, seem to have become greater proficients in war than any of the civilized nations.

About eighty years after the taking of Troy, began the war of the Heraclidæ. Perseus, the founder of Mycenæ, left the crown to his son Electryon. Amphitryon, the grandson of Perseus, by Alceus, married Alcmena, the daughter of Electryon, and thus founded a double title of succession to that sovereignty; but having involuntarily killed his father-in-law, he was obliged to fly his country, while the sceptre was seized by his uncle Sthenelus, the brother of Electryon. By this act of usurpation, Hercules, the son of Amphitryon and Alcmena, was excluded from the throne of Mycenæ. Eurytheus, the son and successor of Sthenelus, endeavoured to destroy Hercules, by exposing him to numberless perilous enterprises; and continuing afterward his persecution against his children, made war against the Athenians, who protected them; but he was defeated and slain. This event opened the Peloponnesus to the Heraclidæ, or descendants of Hercules, who were in the train of subduing the country when they were influenced by the weakest superstition. They retreated upon the response of an oracle, which declared that their absence was the only means of relieving Greece from the ravages of a pestilence. Thyllus, the son of Hercules, deceived by some ambiguous expressions of the oracle, returned after three years, and was killed in a single combat, by which he chose to decide the fate of the contending parties. It was on his death agreed that the Heraclidæ should not for fifty, or, as others say, one hundred years, return to Peloponnesus.

That term being expired, Cresphontes and Aristodemus, the descendants of Hercules, by Hyllus, returned, and found Tesamenes, the son of Orestes, possessed of the kingdoms of Argos, Mycenæ, and Lacedæmon.

They overcame this prince, and took possession of his states; Cresphontes seizing Mycenæ, Temenes Argos, and the two sons of Aristodemus, Eurysthenes and Procles, dividing Lacedæmon. The last is an important fact, as shall afterward be mentioned.

These wars miserably ravaged Greece, and threw it back into barbarism. The states became once more detached and weak; the petty chiefs exercising the most despotic control, and following the barbarous policy of maintaining constant war with their neighbours to make their own office be felt as necessary. But matters were gradually verging to a crisis; and from the insupportable tyranny of those despots, the very name of king (*tyrannos*) became at length universally odious. Thebes was the first of the states which declared for a popular government, and others soon followed her example. The following event was the immediate occasion of this revolution:--

The Heraclidæ, in their war against the Athenians, had been assured of success by the oracle, provided they did not kill Codrus, then king of Athens. In their attack on the Athenian territory, they determined, if possible, to preserve the life of the sovereign; but the generous patriot, who had learned the importance of the sacrifice, resolved to devote himself for his country; he disguised himself like a peasant, and purposely quarrelling with a soldier of the hostile army, procured the death he wished. The Heraclidæ, a second time the dupes of an oracle, retired, not daring to fight against the Fates. Medon and Nileus, the sons of Codrus, disputed the succession to the crown; but the Athenians, though justly venerating the memory of Codrus, and honouring his blood, were weary of monarchy. They determined to establish a democracy; but from respect to their last prince, they conferred on his son, Medon, the office of first magistrate, under the title of *archon*, or the commander. This is the commencement of the Athenian Republic, about

1068 B. C. Of its political structure we shall afterward particularly treat.

It was at this time that the Greeks, weak as they were, began to form distant colonies. Perhaps we ought rather to say, that it was this very weakness, and the oppression which they suffered at home, that forced many of them to abandon their country, and to seek refuge in other lands. A wandering people who have but lately become stationary, or a nation partly composed of foreigners, ingrafting themselves on the ancient inhabitants, have not that affection for a natal soil which is so strongly felt by an indigenous people, who have for a long period of time peaceably inhabited a civilized country. Recently brought under control, and impatient of oppression from the remembrance of their former freedom, the least attempt to straighten the chain which confines them, disposes them immediately to shake it off. If too weak at once to break their fetters, they withdraw themselves from their bondage, and relinquish all connexion with a government to which they do not incline to submit.

Such was the case at this time with many of the Grecian states. The oppression they suffered from the tyranny of their despots, and the miseries of continual war, either with their neighbours or between their domestic factions, forced great multitudes in despair to abandon their country, and to transport themselves to the neighbouring continent of Asia, which the Trojan war had laid open to them. A large body of the Æolians from Peloponnesus landed in the opposite country and founded twelve cities, of which Smyrna was the most considerable. Nileus, the son of Codrus, probably impatient of submission where he thought he had an equal title to rule, carried over into Asia a large body of the disaffected Athenians, reinforced by some Ionians from the Peloponnesus; and he, too, founded twelve cities, of which the most considerable were Ephesus, Miletus, Colophon, and Clazomene. This territory, in compliment to his as-

sociates from Peloponnesus, he termed Ionia, the name of their original country. War, therefore, and domestic oppressions, gave rise to many of the Grecian colonies, which afterward came to be great and powerful states. Other colonies, however, had a different origin. In the more advanced and flourishing periods of the mother-country, the narrow territory possessed by each of the states, and the increased population, compelled them to send off the inhabitants in quest of new settlements. Thus the Dorians sent off colonies to Italy and Sicily, which founded the cities of *Tarentum* and *Locri* in the former; and in the latter *Syracuse* and *Agrigentum*. Colonies afterward, of the same people, betook themselves to the islands of Crete, Rhodes, and Cos; and others passing into Asia, where many of their countrymen were already established, founded *Halicarnassus*, *Cnidus*, and several other cities. Dr. Adam Smith, in his "Wealth of Nations," in treating this subject of the Greek colonization, has justly remarked that with regard to these new settlements, the mother-city, though she considered the colony as a child at all times entitled to great favour and assistance, and owing in return much gratitude and respect, yet viewed it as an emancipated child, over whom she pretended to claim no direct authority or jurisdiction. The colony settled its own form of government, enacted its own laws, and made peace or war with its neighbours as an independent state, which had no occasion to wait for the consent or sanction of the mother-city.

Those colonies which Greece sent abroad in her more advanced periods, from an excessive increase of population, were observed to make a most rapid progress, and soon become great and flourishing states. Dr. Smith has accounted for this fact with his usual sagacity; and I make no scruple to adopt his observations.

"The colony of a civilized nation which takes possession either of a waste country, or of one so thinly

inhabited that the natives easily give place to the new settlers, advances more rapidly to wealth and greatness than any other human society. The colonists carry out with them a knowledge of agriculture and of other useful arts, superior to what can grow up of its own accord in the course of many centuries among savage and barbarous nations. They carry out with them, too, the habit of subordination, some notion of regular government which takes place in their own country, of the system of laws which support it, and of a regular administration of justice; and they naturally establish something of the same kind in the new settlement. But among savage and barbarous nations, the natural progress of law and government is still slower than the natural progress of arts, after law and government have been so far established as is necessary for their protection.

"The progress of many of the ancient Greek colonies toward refinement, wealth, and greatness, seems accordingly to have been extremely rapid. In the course of a century or two, several of them appear to have rivalled, and even to have surpassed their parent states. Thus Syracuse and Agrigentum in Sicily, Tarentum and Locri in Italy, Ephesus and Miletus in Asia Minor, appear to have been at least equal to any of the cities of ancient Greece. Though posterior in their establishment, yet all the arts of refinement, philosophy, poetry, and elegance, seem to have been cultivated as early, and to have been improved as highly, in them as in any part of the mother-country. The schools of the two oldest Greek philosophers, those of Thales and Pythagoras, were established, it is remarkable, not in ancient Greece, but in Miletus and Crotona, the former an Asiatic, the latter an Italian colony. All those colonies had established themselves in countries inhabited by savage and barbarous nations, who easily gave place to the new settlers. Thus they had as much land as they chose, a benign climate, and a fertile soil; for these circumstances must have

dedicated the choice of their place of establishment. They were independent of their mother-country, and at liberty to conduct themselves in any way they should judge most suitable to their interest." It was no wonder they should soon become great and powerful states.

Meantime, the parent-country owed perhaps some of its greatest political revolutions to its first colonies. The Greeks who remained at home, naturally envious of the happiness and prosperity which they saw their countrymen enjoy in their new establishments, began to aspire at the same freedom of constitution. An ardent passion for liberty soon became the ruling passion of the Greeks. Thebes and Athens, we have already remarked, were the first states which threw off the regal government, and substituted in its place the republican. Other states soon followed their example, and either entirely expelled their tyrannical governors, or so circumscribed their authority as to reduce them to the function of the principal magistrate of a democracy.*

A new road was now open to ambition; for it is the quality of the republican form of government to generate and keep alive that passion in all the members of the state; and hence, of all forms of government, it is necessarily the most turbulent. But these republics, thus newly formed, could not subsist by the ancient and very imperfect systems of laws by which they had been formerly governed; for these laws, framed in the spirit of despotism, and owing their obligation solely to the strong hand which carried them into execution, fell of necessity along with the power which framed and enforced them. The infant repub-

* The word *Turannes*, (tyrant) in a strict sense, has no reference to the abuse of power, as in the modern acceptation of the word. It means, properly, the person invested with the chief authority under any form of government, and was applied originally to the best as well as to the worst of sovereigns.

lics of Greece demanded, therefore, new laws; and it was necessary that some enlightened citizen should arise, who had discernment to perceive what system of laws was best adapted to the genius and character of his native state, who had abilities to compile and digest such a system, and sufficient weight and influence with his countrymen to recommend and carry it into execution. Such men were the Spartan Lycurgus and the Athenian Solon.

CHAPTER IX.

THE REPUBLIC OF LACEDÆMON—Origin—Divided Sovereignty—Brown's Theory of the Spartan Constitution examined—Reform of Lycurgus—Senate—Limitation of the Kingly Power—Regulation of Manners—Equal Partition of Land among all the Citizens—Iron Money—Arts prohibited and confined to Slaves—Public Tables—Education—Defects of the System of Lycurgus—Its effects on Manners—Theft authorized—Cruelty—Idleness—Creation of the Ephori.

THE territory of Lacedæmon, or Laconia, of which Sparta, situated on the Eurotas, was the chief city, forms the southeast corner of Peloponnesus; having Argos and Arcadia on the north, Messene on the west, the *Mare internum*, or Mediterranean, on the south, and the bay of Argos on the Ægean Sea to the east. The whole territory, bounded by a natural barrier of mountains, did not exceed fifty miles in its largest diameter, but was extremely populous, containing many considerable towns and excellent seaports. Sparta is said to have been built by a prince of the name of Lacedæmon, who reigned there in the time of Crotonus, king of Argos, and Amphitryon of Athens, 303 years before the destruction of Troy, and 711 before the first olympiad. At the time of the siege of Troy, Menelaus was the sovereign of Lacedæmon, whose wife Helen,

carried off by Paris, the son of Priam, was the cause of the war.

Orestes, the son of Agamemnon, and nephew of Menelaus, succeeded to the sovereignty of Lacedæmon, in right of his mother Clytemnestra, the daughter of Tyndarus. The united kingdoms of Argos, Mycenæ, and Lacedæmon were possessed by his son Tesamenes, who, being expelled and dethroned, as we have seen, by the Heraclidæ, they made a partition of his states, assigning Laconia to Eurysthenes and Procles, two sons of Aristodemus. The brothers did not divide the kingdom, but governed jointly with equal power, as the Roman consuls; and such continued to be the form of the Spartan sovereignty during a succession of thirty princes of the line of Eurysthenes, and twenty-seven of the race of Procles. The celebrated Lycurgus was the son of Polydectes, the sixth prince in a direct descent from Procles. Of the great political revolution operated by this eminent legislator we shall immediately proceed to give some account, after a previous examination of a new theory of the Spartan government, which, though extremely ingenious, rests on no basis of historical evidence.

It is in general a very just opinion that political establishments and forms of government have owed their origin not so much to the genius and efforts of any individual lawgiver or politician, as to a natural progress in the condition of men, and the state of society in which they arose: but this observation, in general true, is not universally so. It is as fallacious a position to assert that no political establishment has been the result of the genius of a single man, as to affirm that all have had that origin. It is too much the prevailing passion with speculative politicians to reduce everything to general principles. Man, say they, is everywhere the same animal; and will, placed in similar situations, always exhibit a similar appearance. His manners, his habits, his improvements, the government under which he lives, the municipal laws by which

he is regulated, arise naturally from that situation in which we find him, and all is the result of a few general laws of nature which operate equally upon the whole of the human kind. I very much fear that this fondness for generalizing has been prejudicial both to sound philosophy and to historic truth, by making fact bend to system. I am afraid that those who have flattered themselves with possessing that penetration of intellect which can develop the simple but hidden laws which regulate human nature, have forgotten that it is the knowledge of facts alone that must lead to the discovery of those laws; and that to know for certain whether we possess those necessary facts, we must have attained a perfect acquaintance with the history of the whole species. The philosopher, who antecedently to this extensive knowledge should, from a partial view of a single nation or race of men, or even from the best details which history can furnish, think himself qualified to lay down the laws of the species, may have the ability to make a very beautiful hypothesis, which, after all, may be as distant from the truth as a Utopian romance.

These reflections have occurred on considering a theory with regard to the constitution of Sparta, which was first started by an ingenious writer, Dr. Brown, in his Essay on Civil Liberty; and as it pleases the imagination by its ingenuity, it has obtained of late a pretty general currency. It has been adopted by Mr. Logan in a small tract entitled "The Philosophy of History," and has thence been ingrafted into a larger work, probably written by the same author, though under a different name.*

The theory to which I allude, proceeding upon this principle, that all political establishments result naturally from the state of society in which they arise, gives the following ingenious account of the origin of the Spartan government, and solution of all those singular phenomena which it exhibited.

* Rutherford's View of Universal History.

The army of the Heraclidæ, when they came to recover the dominion of their ancestors, was composed of Dorians from Thessaly, the most barbarous of all the Greek tribes. The Achæans, the ancient inhabitants of Laconia, were compelled to seek new habitations, while the barbarians of Thessaly took possession of their country. Of all the nations which are the subject of history, this people, it is said, bore the nearest resemblance to the savages of America. An American tribe, where a chief presides, where the council of the aged deliberate, and the assembly of the people give their voice, is on the eve of such political establishment as the Spartan constitution. The Dorians, or Thessalians, settled in Lacedæmon, manifested the same manners with all other nations in a barbarous state. Lycurgus did no more than arrest them in that state by forming their usages into laws. He checked them at once in the first stage of improvement; he put forth a bold hand to that spring which is in society, and stopped its motion.

It remains now to inquire whether this ingenious theory is consistent with historic truth. It may be remarked, in the first place, that the Dorians, thus represented as one of the most barbarous of the Greek nations, were in no period of history described as possessing that character. From the nature of their country, they were in ancient times a pastoral people, whose chief occupation was the care of their flocks and herds; and hence the Doric character in poetry and music is synonymous with the pastoral. But the Dorians inhabiting the centre of Greece adjoining to Attica, and in the immediate vicinity of Delphos, were probably among the most early refined of the Grecian tribes. They were among the first who, from an excessive population, sent forth distant colonies; and, if we are to judge of the mother state from her children, we should estimate their civilization at that period to be remarkable; since their colonies Syracuse and Agrigentum, Tarentum and Locri, were within a short pe-

riod of their foundation among the most polished and luxurious of the states of antiquity.

But in reality we have no sufficient authority for this alleged fact, that the Dorians, or any other people, expelled the ancient inhabitants of Laconia, and took possession of their country. That the Heraclidæ, after a tedious war, at length recovered the dominions of their ancestors, is a fact upon which all antiquity is agreed; but that they used the absurd and unnatural policy of extirpating their own natural subjects, and planting a race of strangers in their stead, is an assertion which is not easily to be credited. A single oration of Isocrates is quoted as countenancing this alleged fact. Addressing the Lacedæmonians, he says, "Ye were originally Dorians;" and in another passage he says that the Dorians agreed to follow the Heraclidæ on condition of getting a share of the conquered lands. On this slender authority rests the supposed fact, that the Dorians got the whole of this territory by the extirpation of its former inhabitants. An incidental passage in the speech of a rhetorician, referring to an event which must have happened near eight hundred years before his time, is thus the only warrant for a fact which in itself is contrary to all probability.

And here the question may be put, whence has it happened that this idea of the origin of the Spartan constitution should have escaped all the politicians of antiquity—all those ingenious and accurate writers who have been at the utmost pains to delineate the origin and nature of this extraordinary system of government—that those great geniuses of antiquity who lived so much nearer to the times of which they treated—who had all the information we have, and unquestionably a great deal more that we have lost—should not have had the sagacity to develop this very simple idea of the rise of this extraordinary constitution? How it has happened that Xenophon, Plutarch, Aristotle, Plato, Polybius, should, after all their researches on the subject, never have once stumbled

upon a truth of such obvious discovery; that all those writers should have joined in the highest encomiums of the extraordinary political ability of Lycurgus in effecting so singular and so violent a change in the constitution of his country and manners of his people —and that it should now be discovered, at the distance of above 2600 years, that this legislator, so celebrated in antiquity, made no change whatever, and had no other merit than that of fixing by laws the manners of his countrymen in the rude state in which he found them.

Xenophon, in his treatise on the Lacedæmonian polity, enlarges on the most extraordinary genius of Lycurgus, who could devise a system so opposite to that of all other establishments, and is continually adverting to the contrariety between the laws which he established, and those which prevailed in the neighbouring states.

Plutarch says that Lycurgus, on returning after an absence of many years, which he had spent in Crete, in Egypt, in Africa, in Spain, and in Asia, in conference with the learned men of all those countries, and in the study of their laws and governments, conceived the great design of entirely new modelling the laws and constitution of his country, then in the utmost disorder and imperfection. He mentions particularly that the separation of the military profession from that of the mechanical arts, was what Lycurgus most admired in Egypt, and thence he introduced the same regulation among his own countrymen at his return. He saw, says Plutarch, that "partial amendments would be like a mild and gentle medicine in a mortal disease; that the cure must be made by cutting off at once every principle of ancient corruption, and thus giving the body politic a new, vigorous, and healthy constitution." The same author informs us, that the execution of this design was attended, as might have been expected, with the greatest difficulty, and relates a particular circumstance which strongly proves it:

the regulation of the diet of the citizens excited such commotion, that the lawgiver in a popular tumult had one of his eyes beaten out.

Such are the ideas of two of the ablest politicians of antiquity, who have written professedly of the Spartan constitution and government. We have no hint from them of this ingenious theory, of fixing the manners of barbarians, or stopping the spring of society. Do we find anything of this notion in Plato? Not a word: everything, on the contrary, which marks an extraordinary change effected by Lycurgus; which intimates the difficulties he met with, and the force of genius by which he surmounted them. "He appeared," says Plato, "*like a god among men.*" He realized and actually executed what the greatest philosophers have scarcely dared to imagine: to raise men above the passion of interest, above pain, above pleasure; to extinguish in them the strongest propensities of nature, and to fill their whole souls with the love of glory and of their country.

Do we find any trace of these modern ideas in Herodotus, in Aristotle, in Polybius? Nothing that approaches to them; they all breathe the same sentiments; they all paint the wonderful change operated by Lycurgus, the extraordinary genius of that politician and lawgiver. But the modern theorists have discovered in the ancient governments principles and political springs which lay concealed from those who framed and those who lived under them. They have traced the principles of the Spartan constitution among every barbarous people; their government and laws among *the savages in America;* and the singular manners and more singular institutions which distinguished the Spartans from all the rest of Greece, among the tribes of savages who wander in the woods, and live in a state of nature.

If the laws of Sparta have this resemblance to the institutions of all barbarous nations, I would ask among what barbarous people do we find such institu-

tions as the following, or anything in their manners analagous to them? Children at Sparta were not considered as belonging to the individual parents, but to the state. After the performance of the first maternal duties, the youth were educated at the charge of the public; and every citizen had as much authority over his neighbour's children as over his own. Slaves, in the same manner, were, at Sparta, a species of common property; every man might make use of his neighbour's slaves; and hunt, as Xenophon informs us, not only with his neighbour's servants, but with his dogs and horses. Among nations in their rudest state, as the savages of America, we know that the condition of children is, that they are subjected to the absolute will and disposal of the father; the community or tribe has no more concern with the children of the individual than they have with his bow or his hatchet, or the prey that he has taken or slain with his arrows.

A communion of property, such as that we have mentioned, is totally adverse to the manners of a savage people, whose characteristic feature is predominant selfishness, and where the notions of the individual with respect to the property he possesses are obstinately repugnant to all communication.

The strong inducement to marriage held forth by the laws of Lycurgus, by punishing those with infamy who refused to marry, has no foundation in the manners of any of those barbarous nations with which we are acquainted.

We discover not in barbarous tribes anything analogous to the oath of government, which, at Sparta, was annually renewed between the kings and people. The kings swore to rule according to the laws, and the people took a solemn oath, by the mouth of their magistrates, to be faithful and obedient, *on that condition*, to their government.

The confinement of the citizens of Sparta to the same simple diet, and the public tables, where all

fed in common, have no parallel among any barbarous people that has ever yet been discovered. Intemperance in food, and drunkenness, are among the predominant vices of all rude nations.

No philosophic traveller has yet discovered among any barbarous nations in that period when they have become stationary, and have a fixed territorial residence, any traces of any agrarian law. If this could be found in any savage state, we might then suppose that Lycurgus made no extraordinary innovation when he divided Laconia into thirty-nine thousand equal portions among its whole inhabitants.

Similar illustrations might be added without number. It cannot be alleged, in opposition to those instances I have mentioned, that they are minute or unessential circumstances of dissimilarity, which would not counterbalance the great and material points of coincidence; they are, on the contrary, great and capital features of the Spartan constitution, to which we shall not find the smallest resemblance in the institutions or manners of any barbarous people. Instances of this kind, where they consist of important and specific facts, have much more influence than general characters either of weight or dissimilarity. It is just as absurd to say, that a barbarous American tribe, where a chief presides, where the council of the aged deliberate, and the assembly of the people gives its voice, is on the eve of such a constitution as that of Sparta, as it were to say that they are on the eve of such a constitution as that of Britain;—because there is a coincidence of the same general characters, a king presiding, a privy-council deliberating, and the people giving their voice by their representatives in parliament.

I forbear to pursue this subject to a greater length. Too much, it may be thought, has been said on this modern theory of the Spartan government: but the currency it has obtained, and the general prevalence of the spirit of systematizing, which is hurtful to

improvement in most sciences, and is particularly dangerous in matters of history, seemed to make it necessary that this remarkable example should meet with particular examination. I proceed now to a short delineation of the constitution of Sparta, and shall consider its great legislator in that point of view in which his character has been regarded by all antiquity.

The return of the Heraclidæ, has we have seen, gave two kings to Lacedæmon. In the partition of their conquests, Sparta fell to the share of Eurysthenes and Procles, the sons of Aristodemus, who agreed to a joint dominion, which should descend in the same manner to their posterity. The sovereignty, split into two branches, remained thus divided for about 900 years. The earlier periods of this government were, from that cause, as might have been expected, most disorderly and tumultuous. While each ruler acknowledged no other law than his own will, to which he found a frequent opposition from the equally arbitrary will of another, it is easy to imagine what must have been the condition of the subject, and what the weakness and disorder of the kingdom.

In this miserable state of anarchy, Lycurgus succeeded to one branch of the throne, by the death of his brother Polydectes; but the widow of the last prince being after a few months delivered of a son, he yielded the crown to his infant nephew. Thus at liberty, and meditating more effectually to serve his country at a future period, he travelled into Crete, Asia, and Egypt, in the view of studying the laws of foreign nations and the spirit of their governments. The singular example he had shown of moderation in resigning the throne, his known abilities, and the fruits expected from those treasures of acquired knowledge he was now supposed to possess, made his countrymen pray his his return with eager impatience. He returned to Sparta; and even

the kings themselves are said to have joined the voice of the people in soliciting his aid to reform and save his country.

Lycurgus undertook the arduous office in the true spirit of disinterested patriotism. He perceived immediately that he must encounter the most formidable difficulties in effecting what he proposed—a total change, not only in the government but in the manners of his people. For thisgreat purpose, he had learned from the example of the Cretan Minos, that no engine was so powerful over the minds of a rude and ignorant people, as the belief of acting by supernatural aid. The Delphian oracle, tutored, it may be supposed, to the purpose, declared Lycurgus the friend and favourite of the gods; and proclaimed to Sparta, that from him she should derive the most perfect government on earth.

Armed with this heavenly sanction, Lycurgus boldly proposed his system. The former constitution, if it deserved that name, was an unnatural mixture of an hereditary divided monarchy, and a disorderly democracy. Between these contending powers, there was no clearly defined partition of authority, nor any intermediate power to preserve the balance. To supply this want was the first aim of Lycurgus. He created a senate, elective, of twenty-eight members, whose function was, as a national council, to prepare and digest laws and ordinances, which the people had a power to approve or reject. Nothing could come before the assembly of the people that had not either originated in the senate, or previously received its sanction. On the other hand, the approbation of the people was necessary to validate the determinations of the senate. Thus, in fact, the sovereignty resided properly in the people; to whom the senate was a council, furnished with sufficient power to regulate without dictating their determinations.

The kings presided in the senate, and had a double

suffrage. They were likewise the generals of the republic; but in other respects, their power was extremely limited. They could form no enterprise without the sanction of a council of the citizens, whose duty was to watch over their measures. On considering this circumscribed authority of the kings, Condillac has well remarked, that the throne seemed preserved in the line of the Heraclidæ, only with the view of preventing any citizen aspiring to it; and two kings were in reality less dangerous to liberty than one; since they constantly kept alive two opposite parties, each restraining the other's exertions, and thus preventing all approach to tyranny.

A system thus simple, and thus beautifully balanced, seemed in some measure to ensure its own duration. But Lycurgus well knew that permanence was not to be looked for from the best-concerted system, if attention were not given at the same time to the regulation of that great spring on which all governments depend, the manners of the people. *Quid leges sine moribus vanæ proficiunt?* Of what avail are laws without good morals?

In this important article, the regulation of manners, one single principle influenced the whole plan of Lycurgus. *Luxury is the bane of society.* Let us see in what manner the particular institutions of the Spartan legislator were calculated to guard against that powerful source of corruption.

The inequality of possessions was in the first place to be corrected, which could not be done without a new partition of territorial property. This was in all probability the greatest of those difficulties which Lycurgus had to encounter. An agrarian law, as striking at the root of wealth, pre-eminence and luxury, is of all political regulations that which has ever been found of the most difficult accomplishment. We shall see the effects of such attempts in the Roman commonwealth. The Greek historians have left us much in the dark as to the means which Lycurgus

employed to enforce this necessary, but harsh and violent change. It seems most probable that he gained the wealthiest of the citizens to an acquiescence in this measure, by artfully employing the passion of honour to combat that of interest; for example, by admitting this class of men chiefly to a share in the government of the state, when the senate was first formed, and the chief offices of the commonwealth supplied. As for the great body of the people, they would probably be gainers by the distribution.

The more effectually to annihilate the distinction of wealth, the Spartan legislator, instead of gold and silver, substituted *iron money;* the small value of which rendered the current specie of such unwieldy bulk, that no individual could easily accumulate a large quantity without the discovery of his avarice. The sum of ten *minæ*, equal to about thirty pounds sterling, would, in the Spartan money, as Plutarch tells us, fill a large apartment, and could not be transported without a yoke of oxen. This iron money, moreover, being probably estimated at a higher value than its intrinsic worth, prevented its currency beyond the Lacedæmonian territory; and thus contributed to another view of the legislator, in checking all commercial intercourse with foreign states.

In a government formed upon the principle of exterminating luxury, and abolishing all inequality of property, the exercise of no arts could be tolerated unless such as were merely necessary. The practice even of these, which might have occasioned some inequality of wealth, was forbidden to all the free subjects of the state, and permitted only to the slaves. Commerce was strictly prohibited; and although the territory of Lacedæmon contained a considerable extent of seacoast, and afforded many excellent harbours, the Spartans allowed no foreigners to approach their shores, and had not a single trading vessel of their own.

Amidst these regulations repressive of every species

of luxury, one of the most remarkable was the institution of the *Public Tables*. The whole citizens of the republic were divided into vicinages of fifteen families, and each vicinage had a common table, where all were obliged to dine or make their principal repast, each taking his place in the public hall without distinction of ranks; the kings, senators, and magistrates, indiscriminately with the people. Here all partook of the same homely fare, dressed in the simplest and most frugal manner. At those public tables the youth not only learned moderation and temperance, but wisdom and good morals. The conversation was regulated and prescribed. It turned solely on such subjects as tended to instil into the minds of the rising generation the principles of virtue, and that affection for their country which characterizes the worthy citizens of every government, but was peculiarly eminent under the Spartan constitution.

Among the principal objects of the institutions of Lycurgus, the education of the youth of the republic was that on which the legislator had bestowed the most particular attention. Children, after they had attained the age of seven, were no longer the charge of their parents, but of the state. Before that period they were taught at home the great lessons of obedience and frugality. Afterward, under public masters, their education was such as to train them up to that species of heroism, and the practice of the severer virtues, which so strongly marked the Spartan character. They were taught to despise equally danger and pain. To shrink under the stroke of punishment was a sufficient reason for having that punishment redoubled. Their very sports and amusements were such as are fitted to promote a strength of constitution, and vigour and agility of body. The athletic exercises were prescribed alike for both sexes; as the bodily vigour of the mother is essential to that of her offspring. To run, to swim, to wrestle, to hunt, were the constant exercise of the youth. With regard to

the culture of the mind, the Spartan discipline admitted none of those studies which tend to refine or embellish the understanding. But the duties of religion, the inviolable bond of a promise, the sacred obligation of an oath, the respect due to parents, the reverence for old age, the strictest obedience to the laws, and above all, the love of their country, the noble flame of patriotism, were early and assiduously cultivated. In impressing on the mind these most important lessons, the great duties of morality, and instructing the youth in the knowledge of the laws of their country, the utmost attention was deservedly bestowed.

An acquaintance with the laws was a most material object in the education of all the citizens. Lycurgus did not permit his laws to be written. They were few and simple; and were impressed on the memory of the youth by their parents and masters, continually renewed in their minds by the conversation of their elders, and most effectually enforced by the daily practice of their lives.

Thus the reproach which some authors have thrown on the Spartan education, that it was fitted only to make a nation of soldiers—and that the mind, as to every useful science, was left in absolute ignorance—is a rash and ill-founded accusation. The utmost attention was, on the contrary, bestowed on those which are the most important of all mental occupations, the duties of morality, and that true philosophy which teaches both the practice of the domestic virtues, and the great and important obligations of a citizen. The youth of Sparta, from their attendance at the public tables, were from their infancy familiarly acquainted with all the important business of the commonwealth. They knew thoroughly its constitution, the powers of the several functionaries of the state, and the defined duties and rights which belonged to the kings, the magistrates, and the citizens. Hence arose (more than perhaps from any other cause) that permanence of constitution which has been so justly the admiration

both of ancient and of modern politicians: for where all orders of men know their precise rights and duties, and there are laws sufficient to secure to them the one, and protect them in the exercise of the other, there will rarely be a factious struggle for power or pre-eminence; as all inordinate ambition will be most effectually repressed by a general spirit of vigilance and caution, as well as the difficulty and danger attendant on innovations.

But while we thus give to the general outlines of the plan of Lycurgus that encomium which it justly merits, let us not become the blind panegyrists of a system which, in many particulars, considered in detail, was much more deserving of blame than of admiration.

The Lacedæmonian manners, to the regulation of which so much attention was paid by the laws of Lycurgus, have afforded very ample matter of censure. The regulations especially regarding women have drawn on the Spartan legislator much deserved condemnation both from moralists and politicians. Amid all that rigid austerity of manners which the laws of Lycurgus seem calculated to enforce, how astonishing is it that public decency and decorum should have been totally overlooked! The Spartan women were the reproach of all Greece for their immodesty; and Aristotle imputes chiefly to their licentiousness and intemperance those disorders which were ultimately the ruin of the state.

It is not only in the article of chastity that the Spartan laws have been justly blamed. Theft was a part of the system of education at Lacedæmon. Children were sent out to steal from the public markets and gardens, from the butcher's stalls, and even from private houses. If unsuccessful, they were punished with the loss of a meal; if detected in the theft, they were scourged with severity. It is a lame apology for an institution of this kind to say that it habituated them early to stratagems of war, to danger, and to

vigilance. The talents of a thief are very different from the virtues of a warrior.

Cruelty, too, a quality extremely opposite to heroic virtue, was a strong ingredient in the Spartan system of manners. Paternal or maternal tenderness seemed perfectly unknown among this ferocious people. Newborn children were publicly inspected by the elders of each tribe and such as promised to be of a weak and delicate constitution were immediately put to death by drowning. At the festival of Diana, children were scourged, sometimes even to death, in the presence of their mothers, who exhorted them, meantime, to suffer every extremity of pain without complaint or murmur. It is no wonder that such mothers should receive, without emotion, the intelligence of the death of a son in the field of battle; but is it possible to believe that on such occasions they should so far conquer nature as to express a transport of joy? What judgment must we form of the Spartan notions of patriotic virtue, when, to love their country, it was thought necessary to subdue and extinguish the strongest feelings of humanity, the first instinct of nature.

The barbarous treatment which the Lacedæmonians bestowed on their slaves, or Helots, is mentioned by all ancient writers with extreme censure and just indignation. The Helots were a neighbouring people of Peloponnesus, whom they had subdued in war, and reduced to servitude. They were numerous, and had at times attempted to shake off their yoke; whence it was judged a necessary policy to curb, to intimidate, and to weaken them by the most shocking inhumanity. It was not allowable to sell or to export them; but the youth were encouraged to put them to death for pastime. They went forth to the field to hunt them like wild beasts; and when at any time it was apprehended that those unhappy wretches had become so numerous as to endanger the state, the *cryptia*, or *secret act*, viz., a general massacre in the night, was ordained by law. The apologists of the Spartan legis-

lator tell us, that these enormities cannot be imputed to Lycurgus; that they sprang from the perversion of his institutions, and were unknown in the early and more virtuous periods of the Lacedæmonian state; but a very little reflection must convince us, that they arose necessarily from that system of manners which his institutions were calculated to form.

It were easy to show that the Spartan institutions, however excellent in many respects, carried in themselves the seeds of much disorder.

To virtue there is no such enemy as idleness; but the Lacedæmonians, unless when engaged in war, were totally unoccupied. Lycurgus, it is said, wanted to make a nation of soldiers.* So his apologists conclude, because they find that his constitution was more proper for producing that effect than any other. But the ultimate object of all legislation is not to give a people any particular character, but to furnish them

* Xenophon, who had fought for and against the Lacedæmonians, remarks, that in the knowledge and practice of war, they far excelled all other nations, both Greeks and barbarians. Their troops were divided into regiments consisting of 512 men, subdivided into four companies, and each of these into smaller divisions, commanded by their respective officers. The soldiers were attended by a multitude of artisans and slaves, who furnished them with all necessary supplies, and accompanied by a long train of priests and poets, who flattered their hopes and animated their valour. A body of cavalry always preceded their march. They encamped in a circular form; they employed for their securities out-sentries and videttes; and regularly every morning and evening performed their customary exercises. In the day of battle, the Spartans assumed an unusual gaiety of aspect; and displayed in their dress and ornaments more than their wonted splendour. Their long hair was arranged with simple elegance; their scarlet uniforms and brazen armour diffused a lustre around them. As they approached the enemy, the king performed a sacrifice, the music struck up, and they advanced with firmness and alacrity to the charge. Xenophon has declared, that when he considered the discipline of the Spartans, all other nations appeared but children in the art of war.—*Xenoph. de Rep. Lac.; Gillies's Hist. of Greece*, c. 3.

with such laws as are suited to produce, in their situation, the greatest political happiness. Lycurgus may have judged that the military character was most proper for producing that effect. In a small territory like that of Lacedæmon, security was evidently the first and principal object; and therefore to cherish the military spirit as essential to that end was deservedly a primary view of the legislator; but it ought not to have been his only view. It is in peace that a nation enjoys its truest happiness; and to qualify the citizens of every government for that which is their natural state, the sound health of the body politic, is certainly the chief end of legislation. Much therefore as we may admire the genius and talents of Lycurgus, we cannot say that he had extensive or even just views as a politician, since he seems to have concluded that while his laws cherished the military spirit, every other virtue or quality of a citizen would follow of course. The Lacedæmonians therefore exhibited in their general character exactly what might have been expected from the discipline that trained them. Unless when engaged in war, they were absolutely idle and listless. They had no occupations for a season of peace. The distinction of professions, which in other states gives rise to that separation of interests which, animating each individual, inspires life and vigour into the whole community, was there totally unknown. The common good, or rather the glory of the state, came in place of every private interest—a noble object! but unhappily, from the weakness of our nature, utterly inadequate to the desires and passions of the great mass of a people. The insipid and inactive life of the Spartans was accordingly a perpetual subject of raillery to the rest of the Greeks, and to none more than to the busy, restless, and volatile Athenians. To this purpose Ælian mentions a witticism of Alcibiades, when some one was vaunting to him the contempt which the Lacedæmonians had for death: "It is no wonder,"

said he, "since it relieves them from the heavy burden of an idle and stupid life."

From the military character, however, of this people, the small extent of their territory, and the wise precautions of their lawgiver for preventing all extension of its limits, the constitution of this republic possessed a very strong principle of duration. We shall see that in reality it subsisted much longer without any important revolution than any other of the states of Greece.

The first material change, however, upon the system of Lycurgus was made within 130 years of his own time, by the introduction of a new magistracy, under the name of the *Ephori*. Theopompus, one of the kings, jealous of the power of the senate, which was generally supported by the concurring judgment of the people, devised a plan for influencing their resolutions, by giving them a set of officers of their own body. These officers, termed Ephori, were five in number; they were elected by the people, and enjoyed a similar but a higher power than that of the tribunes of the people at Rome. Instituted at first to form an equipoise between the senate and people, they gradually usurped a paramount power in the state. They could by their own authority expel or degrade the senators, and even punish them capitally for any offence which they might interpret into a state-crime. The kings themselves were under their control, and the Ephori had a right to fine them and put them in arrest; a dangerous prerogative, which it was easy to see would never stop short of absolute power; and accordingly they assumed at length the function of deposing and putting the kings to death. These, on the other hand, still nominally the chief magistrates, plotted against the power and persons of the Ephori; they bribed, deposed, and murdered them. Thus in the latter periods of the Spartan commonwealth, instead of that equal balance established by the original plan of Lycurgus, there was between the different

branches of this constitution a perpetual contention for superiority, the continual source of faction and disorder. Most of the internal causes which in time operated to the decline and fall of the Spartan government, particularly to be found in those institutions which led to the corruption of manners, have been already noticed. These silently undermined this political fabric; while other causes external of its constitution were the more direct and immediate causes of its destruction. These shall be opened in their order, while we pursue the general outlines of the national history; after a brief delineation of the rival republic of Athens, to which we proceed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER X.

THE REPUBLIC OF ATHENS—Revolution in the States of Attica—Regal Government abolished--Perpetual Archons—Draco—Solon—His Institutions—Senate—Areopagus re-established--Power of the Popular Assemblies--Laws--Ostracism—Appeal from all Courts to the People—Manners—Revenue--Grecian History continued, Pisistratus, Hippias and Hipparchus—Alcmæonidæ.

I HAVE, in a former chapter, observed that Greece, in the early part of her history, probably owed some of her greatest political revolutions to her first colonies. The prosperity which the mother-country saw her children enjoy in their new settlements, while she herself was yet groaning under the worst of servitude, that of a bad government, naturally inspired an eager wish to attain, if possible, a similar freedom of constitution. The domestic disorders of Attica, in particular, had grown to a great height. The union of its states by Theseus was but a forced league of association: it was the consequence of the subordinate cities being involved in frequent quarrels, and

hence courting the aid of the principal, that the latter thus acquired a sort of dominion over the whole of them. To bind these firmly together, it was necessary to annihilate in the smaller states this sense of dependence on the principal; to make them all parts of the same body, by abolishing their particular magistracies, bringing about a submission to the same general magistrates, and giving them a common system of laws. Theseus and his immediate successor had attempted this, but were unequal to the task. The disorders which arose from the tyranny of some of those princes, affected a union which their slender political talents had laboured in vain to accomplish; but a union hostile to their powers, which had for its end the abolition of the regal office. Codrus, the last of the kings, was, as we have seen, a true patriot, and worthy to reign; but he having sacrificed his own life to save his country, the Athenians, dreading a renewal of their former oppression, determined to make the trial of a new constitution. They were ignorant, however, of the best means of obtaining what they desired. They abolished the title of king, while the magistrates whom they put in his place enjoyed almost the same authority. From respect to the memory of Codrus, they appointed his son Medon chief magistrate, with the title of *archon* or commander.—They conferred on him the office for life, and even continued it hereditary in his family; so that the Athenian republic was governed for 331 years by a succession of perpetual archons of the family of Codrus. Of the difference between their authority and that of the former kings, historians have given us no distinct idea. Some writers, indeed, tell us, in general terms, that the perpetual archons were accountable to the people for their conduct—a control which the kings did not acknowledge;—but as to the precise nature of the Athenian government at this time, we are, on the whole, extremely ignorant.

This form, however, of a monarchy in all its essen-

tials, though without the name, became in the end equally grievous as that which had preceded it. The perpetual archonship was abolished, and the office was now conferred for ten years. Even this duration was found repugnant to the prevailing spirit of democracy; and after submitting for a few years to the decennial archonship, they reduced the term to a single year, and appointed nine magistrates with equal authority. Of these the chief was called by pre-eminence *the archon*, and, like the Roman consuls, gave his name to the current year in the state annals. The second archon had the title of *king*, (Basileus), and was the head of the religion of the state: the third was termed the *polemarch*, from his function of regulating all military affairs. The remaining six archons were called *thesmothetai*, and held the office of judges in the civil courts of the republic. The whole body of nine formed the supreme council of the state.

Meantime the constitution was by no means strictly defined. The laws framed during the regal government, and accommodated to that despotic authority, were quite unsuitable to the democratic spirit now become predominant; and no attempts had yet been made for their alteration or improvement. The limited power of the annual magistrates was insufficient to check those factions and disorders which a yearly returning election kept constantly alive in the mass of the people.

A virtuous citizen of the name of *Draco*, whose eminent qualities had raised him to the dignity of chief archon, was prompted to attempt a reform, by introducing a code of laws* which might operate as a restraint on all orders of the state. Presuming that a desperate disease requires a violent remedy, and probably influenced by the austerity of his own temper, the penal laws which he framed made no distinction

*There were probably no written laws at Athens before those of Draco.—*Aul. Gell.* i. 1, c. 18.

of offences, but punished all equally with death. The genius of Draco was evidently unequal to the task he had undertaken: he made some changes of form without the essence. He weakened, it is said, the authority of the Areopagus, and instituted a new tribunal, of which the judges were termed *ephetai*, but which was of no duration; and the extreme severity of his laws defeated their own object. They were rarely executed, and fell at length into complete disuse.

In the third year of the 46th olympiad, and 594 years before the Christian era, Solon, a noble Athenian, of the posterity of Codrus, attained the dignity of archon, and was solemnly intrusted by his countrymen with the high power of new modelling the state, and framing for the Athenians a complete digest of civil laws. Solon was a man of extensive knowledge, a virtuous man, and a true patriot; but he seems to have been deficient in that strength of mind and intrepidity of nature which are absolutely necessary for the reformation of a corrupted government. His disposition was too placid and too temporizing. He aimed not at changing the character of his people, nor did he at all attempt to introduce that equality among the citizens so essential to the constitution of a democracy. Accommodating himself to the prevailing passions of men, rather than endeavouring to correct them, his laws, as he said himself, were not the best possible, but the best which the Athenians were capable of receiving.*

The people claimed the chief power in the state—Solon gave it them. The rich wanted offices and dignities—the system of Solon accommodated them to the utmost of their wishes. He divided the whole citizens into four classes. In the three former were the richer citizens, according to their different degrees of wealth. The first class consisted of those who were worth five hundred medimni of grain, or as many measures of oil; the medimnus, according to Arbuthnot's tables of

* Plutarch's Life of Solon.

weights and measures, was somewhat more than four English pecks. The second class consisted of those who were worth three hundred medimni, and who were able to furnish a horse in time of war. The third class comprehended such as had two hundred medimni; and the fourth class consisted of all the rest of the citizens. All the dignities and offices of the commonwealth were supplied out of the three first classes, or the wealthy citizens; but the fourth, which was much more numerous than all the other three, had their right of suffrage in the Ecclesia, public assemblies, where the whole important business of the state was canvassed and determined. The framing of laws, the election of magistrates, the making war or peace, the forming treaties and alliances, and the regulation of all that regarded either religion or civil policy, were debated and decreed in the public assemblies; where the fourth class, from their vast superiority of numbers, carried every question, and of course had supreme rule. In these assemblies every citizen above fifty years of age had the privilege of haranguing.*

To counteract the mischief of a government entirely in the hands of the people, and to regulate in some measure the proceedings of those assemblies, neces-

* To give some idea of the number which constituted the public assembly, or the Legislature of Athens, we learn from two polls of the citizens that were taken, first in the time of Pericles, and afterward in that of Demetrius Phalereus, that the Athenian citizens in the former period amounted to fourteen thousand and forty persons, and in the latter to twenty-one thousand. The remaining population of the republic consisted of slaves male and female, and children and youth under the age of manhood. The former, namely, the actual slaves, amounted to no less than four hundred thousand. The proportion of the free citizens to slaves was still smaller at Lacedæmon than at Athens; whence we may judge how far liberty was truly the characteristic of those ancient republics, whose constitution has been the subject of so much foolish admiration. See *Gillies's Translation of Lysias and Isocrates, Pref.; and Mitford's Greece,*, vol. i. p. 253.--*Thucyd.* l. viii. c. 40.

sarily tumultuous and undecisive, Solon instituted a senate of four hundred members, chosen from among the most respectable of the citizens, whom he invested with the power of deliberating on and preparing all public measures before they came under the cognizance of the popular assemblies; a regulation which gave rise to this just remark of Plutarch, that Solon employed the wise men to reason, and the fools to decide. No motion or overture, with regard to the affairs of the commonwealth, could take its origin in the *Ecclesia:* it must have been previously canvassed and debated in *the Senate.* This great council was augmented to five hundred, and afterward to six hundred, upon an increased number of the Athenian tribes.

Still further to restrain and moderate the proceedings of the public assemblies, Solon re-established the authority of the Areopagus, which Draco had abridged and weakened by the institution of the *Ephetai.* And this tribunal, of whose origin and constitution we have formerly treated, was now invested with more extensive powers and privileges than it had ever before enjoyed. To this august assembly Solon committed the guardianship of his laws, and the charge of executing them. They had the custody of the public treasury, and as Plutarch informs us in the Life of Themistocles, the charge of its expenditure; but this last seems to be inconsistent with the powers lodged in the senate and people. The court of Areopagus, likewise, had a tutorial power over all the youth of the republic. They appointed them masters and governors, and superintended their education. They were likewise the censors of the manners of the people, and were employed to punish the idle and disorderly, and reward the diligent and industrious. For this purpose they were empowered to inquire minutely into the private life and conduct of every citizen; the funds he possessed, the profession he followed, and the manner in which he spent his time: an excellent institution, if we could suppose it to be strictly enforced. The

regulation of everything that regarded religion was likewise committed to this high tribunal.

I have remarked in a former chapter, that the number of the Areopagites seems to have been various at different periods; as some authors mention this tribunal as consisting only of nine judges, others of thirty-one, and others again of fifty-one. Nay, there is a probability that, in the more advanced times of the commonwealth, the numbers were even quadruple what has been mentioned. If the trial of Socrates proceeded before the court, which the nature of his crime (the charge of attacking the religion of his country) makes it presumable it did, we find two hundred and eighty-one judges who voted against him, besides those who gave their suffrages in his favour.

The judges of the Areopagus were chosen from among the most respectable of the citizens, and were generally such as had discharged the office of archon. The most scrupulous attention was paid to character in the election of these judges. The slightest imputation of immorality, a single act of indecency, or even of unbecoming levity, was sufficient to disqualify from obtaining a seat in that tribunal, or to forfeit a place after it had been conferred. To be found in a tavern was such a stain on the character of a judge, that it was deemed a sufficient reason of exclusion from that office. *Let no Areopagite*, says the Athenian laws, *compose a comedy.* That judge was justly thought to have prostituted his character, who had stooped to employ his talents in furnishing a frivolous amusement for the people.

The institution of the senate, and the revival of the authority of the Areopagus, imposed undoubtedly some restraint on the proceedings of the popular assemblies. But still the Athenian populace had the ultimate power of decision in all the affairs of the commonwealth; a constitution that must have rendered fruitless the regulations of the wisest legislator that ever existed. The subsequent detail of the Grecian history will afford

some strong instances of the miseries which flow from so defective a form of Government. "*Illa vetus Græcia*," says Cicero "*quæ quondam opibus, imperio, gloria floruit, hoc uno malo concidit, libertate immoderata ac licentiâ concionum.*"* It was not alone by this disease, as we shall show in its proper place, although that must unquestionably be allowed to have had a great influence. Athens, in particular, was from that cause a scene of incessant disorders and combustion. Continual factions divided the people, and it was often in the power of a venal orator, a worthless demagogue, whose only merit was a voluble tongue and dauntless effrontery, to counteract the measures of the greatest political wisdom, and persuade to such as were ruinous and disgraceful. Athens often saw her best patriots, the wisest and most virtuous of her citizens, shamefully sacrificed to the most depraved and most abandoned.

The particular laws of the Athenian state were, generally speaking, more deserving of encomium than its form of government. Solon restrained the severity of creditors to their debtors, by prohibiting all imprisonment for debt; but he restrained at the same time the frequency of contracting debts by the severe penalty of the forfeiture of the rights of citizenship; a punishment which though it did not reduce a man to servitude, deprived him of all voice in the public assembly, or share in the government of the commonwealth. In like manner, if a debtor died insolvent, his heir was disfranchised till the debt was paid. This was a wise regulation; for no indigent man ought to be a legislator. The Areopagus, by an inquiry termed *dokimasia*, inquired into the life and morals of all who held offices in the state, and such as could not stand the scrutiny were not only incapacitated for employ, but declared infamous. Such was the award likewise against a

* "Ancient Greece herself—once flourishing in dominion, wealth, and fame, fell by this disease alone—the immoderate freedom and licentiousness of her popular assemblies.

son who should refuse to support his indigent parents. Solon ordained that a man's inheritance should be equally divided among all his lawful children, and allowed no higher provision to an illegitimate child than *five minæ.** He permitted a husband to divorce his wife on restoring her dowry; and a wife to leave her husband upon reasonable cause shown to a judge, and allowed by him.

By the Athenian laws, children, whose fathers were killed in the service of their country, were appointed to be educated at the public expense. "Let the father," says the laws of Solon "have the privilege of bestowing on that son a funeral encomium, who died valiantly fighting in the field. He who receives his death while fighting with undaunted courage in the front of the battle, shall have an annual harangue spoken to his honour."

The laws relating to slaves did great honour to the humanity of the Athenians, and formed a strong contrast to the inhuman usages which prevailed with regard to them at Lacedæmon. All Athenian slaves were allowed to purchase their freedom at a price stipulated by the magistrate. If any slave found his treatment intolerably severe, and was unable to purchase his freedom, he might oblige his master to sell him to another who would use him better. The emancipation of a slave, however, did not exempt him from all the duties to his master. He was still bound to the performance of certain services which the law prescribed, and to show him due homage and respect as a patron and benefactor. Such enfranchised slaves were not admitted to the rights of citizens. They were not allowed to attend the public assemblies; nor could they hold any office in the commonwealth. Their enfranchisement relieved them only from the hardships of servitude. Yet they might marry free women; and their children by such had all the rights of citizens.

* The Athenian mina was in our money, equal to $13 32.

It was a very singular law of the Athenians, which permitted a man to bequeath his wife, like any other part of his estate, to any one whom he chose for his successor. The mother of Demosthenes was left by will to Alphobus, with a portion of *eighty minæ*. The form of such a bequest has been preserved, and runs thus. "This is the last will of Pasio the Acharnéan. I bequeath my wife Archippe to Phormio, with a fortune of one talent* in Peparrhetus, one talent in Attica, a house worth a hundred minæ, together with the female slaves, the ornaments of gold, and whatever else may be in it."†

One law of a very improper tendency, was peculiar to the state of Athens:—it was that which allowed a *popular action* for most offences—or permitted *any citizen* to be the prosecutor of any crime committed against *a citizen*. An injury done to an individual, it is true, is not only an offence against that person, but likewise against the state, whose laws are thereby violated: yet it is a very dangerous policy to allow to any person whatever of the public, a right of prosecuting the aggressors. It is easy to conceive what a source would thus be opened for unjust, revengeful, and calumnious prosecutions. It is true, that the mischiefs which might possibly arise from this law were counteracted, in some measure, by another ordinance, which declared, that any accuser or prosecutor who had not a fifth part of the votes in his favour should pay a heavy fine; but the remedy was not adequate to the evil—for even the most calumnious accusations might often find a fifth part of the people to support them; and the rich would seldom be restrained from the gratification of malevolence or revenge by a pecuniary fine.

This leads to the mention of one most impolitic and pernicious law; not indeed peculiar to Athens, but

* A talent was about eight hundred and sixty dollars.
† Jones' *Commentary on Isæus.*

common likewise to the states of Argos, Megara, Miletus, Syracuse, and others. Solon, who found the temperament of his countrymen repugnant to those rigorous restraints on the accumulation of wealth which Lycurgus had established at Sparta, was desirous however of providing some security against the danger which might arise in a democracy, from any individual attaining an inordinate degree of power or influence. For this purpose the Athenian lawgiver retained and enforced an ancient institution termed the *Ostracism*, which was said to have been first intrduced in the age of Theseus. The professed object of this institution was not the punishment of offenders. It was not requisite that a man should be accused of any crime to deserve the sentence of the ostracism. It was enough that any person, either from his wealth, his uncommon talents, or even his eminent virtues, should become an object either of envy, or of public praise and admiration. When a citizen had arrived at that degree of credit as to fall under either of those descriptions, and to offend by too much popularity, any individual of the people might demand an ostracism. The ceremony was this: every citizen who chose took a *shell* or piece of tile, on which having written the name of the person in his opinion the most obnoxious, he carried it to a certain place in the forum, which was enclosed with rails, and had ten gates, for the ten tribes. Officers were appointed to count the number of *shells;* for, if they were fewer than 6000, the vote did not take place. If they exceeded that number, the several names were laid apart, and the man whose name was found on the greatest number of *shells*, was banished for ten years from his country; his estate in the meantime remaining entire for his own use or that of the family.

This "*shelling*," though it has found its advocates, as apparently consonant in theory to the spirit of a pure republic, was in practice a barbarous, disgraceful, and impolitic institution. It powerfully repressed

ambition; but it was by discouraging merit and the desire of excellence. It afforded an easy handle for the worst and most dangerous members of the commonwealth to rid themselves of the worthiest and the best: thus counteracting its own end, and paving the way for that usurpation against which it was intended as a barrier. It recommended the worst passions of the human mind under the disguise of the best: it substituted envy for patriotism, made virtue criminal, and stained the nation with the most opprobrious character—that of public ingratitude. Thus we find, in the course of the history of this republic, that virtue, without the imputation or suspicion of ambitious views, was frequently the victim of this pernicious law. It was enough that Aristides by his virtues had merited the glorious epithet of *just:* that epithet, in the eyes of the Athenian people, was sufficient crime. When Aristides himself was passing by, an illiterate rustic requested him to write upon his shell the name of *Aristides.* "Why, what harm, my friend," said the other, "has Aristides done you?"—"None in the world," replied the clown; "but I hate to hear everybody call him the *Just.*" Thucydides, from whom Athens had received the most eminent services, at length the victim of ostracism, composed in his exile that history in which he records the fame of his ungrateful country; a fact which has drawn from Cicero this severe but just remark: "Hos libros tum scripsisse dicitur, cum a republica remotus, et id quod optimo cuique civi Athenis accidere solitum est, in exilium pulsus esset."* With much reason does Valerius Maximus, after enumerating the instances of similar ingratitude to Miltiades, to Cimon, to Themistocles, to Phocion, and particularly to Aristides exclaim with bitter irony:—"Felices Athenas, quæ post illius exilium invenire

* "Those great works are said to have been written when he was driven into exile; the common reward bestowed by Athens on her most virtuous citizens."

aliquem aut virum bonum, aut amantem sui civem potuerunt."*

The laws of Solon, unlike those of Lycurgus, were all committed to writing: but one fault, common to all the laws of the Athenian legislator, was the obscurity with which they were expressed: a capital defect indeed of laws, when, instead of a clear warning voice, which, teaching every man his duty, represses litigation, they mislead by their obscurity, and are thus the perpetual source of contest and chicane.

It was a singular peculiarity of the constitution of Athens, and, as Plutarch informs us, likewise of Thebes, that after a law was voted and passed in the assembly of the people, the proposer of the law might have been cited in the ordinary civil courts, tried and brought to punishment, if the court was of opinion that the law was prejudicial to the public. This peculiarity is noticed in one of Mr. Hume's political essays, (*Of some remarkable Customs,*) and that author mentions several examples in the Grecian history; among the rest the trial of Ctesiphon, for that law which he had proposed and carried, for rewarding the services of Demosthenes with a crown of gold; a trial which gave occasion to two of the most splendid and animated orations that remain to us of the composition of the ancients; the orations of Æschines and Demosthenes Peri stephanou,[*concerning the crown.*] This species of trial was entitled the Graphe paranomon, or the indictment of illegality; and was intended as a check upon the popular leaders, who, by their influence in the public assemblies, were able frequently to procure the enactment of most pernicious laws. This was indeed a violent remedy, and apparently very contrary to republican freedom; but it was esteemed so beneficial a provision, that Æschines, in his oration

* "Happy Athens! that after driving such a man from her bosom, could yet find one virtuous or devoted citizen remaining."

against Ctesiphon, maintains that the democracy could not subsist without it.

An appeal lay from all the Athenian tribunals, except the Areopagus, to the *ecclesia*, or assembly of the people. The interpretation of the laws may thus be said to have depended ultimately on the judgment of a populace swayed by prejudices, divided by faction, or the dupes of a worthless orator or demagogue. The Athenian jurisprudence therefore rested on no fixed principles, or solid basis. It is almost equivalent to a total want of laws, to have such only as the passions and caprices of a people can mould or distort, or at pleasure so interpret, as to accommodate to the most opposite purposes.

I have thus endeavoured very briefly to trace the outlines of the Athenian constitution. The distinct powers of every branch of that constitution, and the precise extent of jurisdiction, the rights and privileges of the several courts, have occupied many volumes, and supplied an immense field of learned but unimportant controversy, which furnishes at least a proof of the difficulty of obtaining distinct notions of the particular features of this constitution, though its general nature appears sufficiently intelligible. Those who wish to go more into detail ought to peruse with attention the fragment of Aristotle concerning the Athenian Constitution, the 2nd, 4th, and 6th books of his Politics, the tract of Xenophon on the Athenian Republic, the Life of Solon by Plutarch, the *Archæologia* of Archbishop Potter, and, to sum up all, the various information concerning the Athenian state, contained in the *Thesaurus Græcarum Antiquitatum*, (collection of Grecian antiquities,) of Gronovius.

The manners of the Athenians formed a most striking contrast to those of the Lacedæmonians. It is, in fact, hardly possible to find a greater dissimilarity even in nations inhabiting the most opposite extremes of the earth. The Athenian found, either

in his relish for serious business, or in his taste for pleasure, a constant occupation.* The arts at Athens met with the highest encouragement. The luxury of the rich perpetually employed the industry of the poor; and the sciences were cultivated with the same ardour as the arts; for the connexion of mental enjoyments with moderate gratification of sense is the refinement of luxury. But in the pleasures of the Athenians, unless, indeed, in the most corrupted times of the commonwealth, decency was most scrupulously observed. We have seen those rigid restraints on the conduct of magistrates. An archon convicted of drunkenness was, for the first offence, condemned to pay a heavy fine, and for a second was punished with death. This general decency of character was much heightened by a certain urbanity of manners, which eminently distinguished the Athenians above all the other states of Greece. There are some singular proofs of this character recorded, even of their public measures. Plutarch, in the life of Demosthenes, has mentioned two remarkable examples. In the war against Philip of Macedon, one of the couriers of that prince was intercepted, and his despatches seized; they opened all the letters which he carried, except those written by Philip's queen, Olympia, to her husband. These the Athenians transmitted immediately to Philip, with the seals unbroken. In the same war, Philip was suspected of having distributed bribes among the Athenian orators. Their houses were ordered to be searched; but with singular regard to decorum, they forbade to break into the house of Callicles, because he was then newly married. Such was certainly the natural character of the Athenians—generous,

* The best sources of information with regard to the general manners of the Athenians, are the *Comedies of Aristophanes*, the *Characters of Theophrastus*, the *Lives of Plutarch*, and the *Orations of Demosthenes*.

decent, humane, and polished; but turbulence and inconstancy often stained their public measures with a character very opposite to the natural disposition of the people. We have more flagrant instances of public ingratitude in the single state of Athens, than are to be found perhaps in all the other states and kingdoms of antiquity.*

The capital features of the two great republics of Greece. Sparta and Athens, may be thus briefly delineated. Sparta was altogether a military establishment; every other art was prohibited—industry among individuals was unknown, and domestic economy unnecessary, for all was in common. The Lacedæmonians were active only when at war. In peace, their manner of life was languid, uniform, indolent, and insipid. Taught to consider war as the sole honourable or manly occupation, they contracted a rigid and

* Plutarch records many anecdotes, which strongly mark the fickleness of the character of the Athenians. The following may serve as an example:—Themistocles intimated in public that he had formed a most important project, but that the strictest secrecy was necessary to insure its success. The people answered, "Let it be told to Aristides alone, and we shall be regulated by his advice." Themistocles acquainted Aristides that the project was to burn the fleet of the combined states, then at anchor in perfect security in the harbour of Pegasus; a scheme which would give Athens the absolute command of Greece. Aristides told the people that nothing could be more advantageous than the project of Themistocles; but nothing at the same time more unjust. The whole assembly with one voice cried out, "Let us have nothing to do with it." This was to feel and to decide with rectitude and propriety. But mark a striking contrast to this honourable decision. A few years afterward, it was proposed to the Athenians, to violate an article of a treaty formed with the allies of the republic. The people asked the advice of Aristides, who, in the same spirit as before, told them, that the counsel was advantageous, but unjust. The upright statesman had no longer the same influence; the perfidious suggestion was now unanimously approved of.

ferocious turn of mind, which distinguished them from all the other states of Greece. Despising the arts themselves, they despised all who cultivated them. Their constitution was fitted to form and to maintain a small, a brave, and an independent state; but had no tendency to produce a great, a polished, or a conquering people.

At Athens, peace was the natural state of the republic; and the institutions of Solon tended to form his fellow-citizens for the enjoyment of civil happiness. It was a punishable crime at Athens to be idle, and every citizen was compelled to industry, and to the utmost exertion of his talents. It was not enough that each should choose himself a particular profession. The court of Areopagus inquired into and ascertained the extent of his funds, the amount of his expenditure, and consequently the measure of his industry and economy. The sciences were in contempt at Sparta; but dependent on the arts, and essential to the highest and most rational enjoyment of life, they were held at Athens in the greatest honour and esteem. Luxury was the characteristic of the Athenian, as frugality of the Spartan. They were equally jealous of their liberty; because liberty was equally necessary to each, for the enjoyment of his favourite scheme of life. In the best times of both republics, their military character was nearly equal. The bravery of the Spartan sprang from a fostered hardihood, and constitutional ferocity; the courage of the Athenian was derived from the principle of honour. The character of the individual at Athens was humane, polite, equitable, and social; but from a faulty constitution, the character of the public was fickle, inconstant, frivolous, cruel, and ungrateful.

The revenue of the territory of Attica has admitted of various estimations by different authors. The Athenians, at the commencement of their first war with Lacedæmon, before proceeding to vote the necessary supplies for the armament, made a general esti-

mate, as Polybius informs us, of their lands, their houses, and their whole property, which did not quite amount to 6000 talents; a sum equivalent to $5,161,500. Demosthenes, in one of his orations touching on this subject, makes the value of the land at Attica amount nearly to that sum, exclusive of houses and effects. Meursius extravagantly supposes this to mean the annual value of the lands; a computation which would make the revenue of Attica, a small territory of sixty miles in length, and thirty broad, exceed the annual census of several of the European kingdoms. In ancient Greece, gold and silver bore a much higher proportion to other commodities than they do at present. The same quantity of these metals would, in those times, have purchased in Greece nearly ten times as much of the necessaries of life, or commanded ten times as much labour, as at present in most of the countries of Europe. A strong presumption, therefore, arises, that even the most moderate of those accounts of the census of Attica are much exaggerated.

The Spartan government had acquired solidity, while all the rest of Greece was yet unsettled, and torn by domestic dissensions. Had the Spartans then aspired at extending their dominion, they might with great facility have subdued all Greece. But the ambition of extensive conquest was not agreeable to the spirit of their constitution. Their passion for liberty prompted them rather to assist others in maintaining or asserting their independence; and this generous conduct inspired so high a respect for their equity and moderation, that contending states not unfrequently chose them the umpires of their differences. Yet though this was their general character, there are some instances of their departure, even in those early times, from this generosity of conduct. Their behaviour to the Messenians, a neighbouring people who solicited their aid in war, was extremely dishonourable. They took advantage of their weakness, to reduce this unfortunate people to the condition of slaves, as they had

before done by the Helots. It was contrary to their laws to communicate to strangers the rights of citizenship; and we have before remarked, that when the number of their slaves increasing gave room to apprehend danger to the state, it was customary to reduce them by a general massacre.

While the power of Sparta was thus high among the states of Peloponnesus, Athens, a prey to faction and civil discord, was for a while threatened with the entire loss of that liberty which she had scarcely begun to enjoy. Peisistratus, a relation of Solon, a man of splendid talents, highly popular from his wealth and liberality, began secretly to aspire at the sovereign power. He propagated a report, that his enemies, jealous of his asserting the rights of the people, had endeavoured to assassinate him; and on that pretence demanded a guard for the protection of his person, which he employed in seizing the citadel. The Athenians submitted without much opposition. Solon, indignant at the unworthy conduct of his kinsman, attempted to revive the patriotic spirit, and urge the recovery of their freedom; but he met with no support; and the aged lawgiver, unable to brook the degradation of his country, bade adieu to Athens, and died in voluntary exile.

A considerable party of the citizens, however, were secretly hostile to the usurpation of Peisistratus. The faction of the Alcmæonidæ, of whom the chiefs were Megacles and Lycurgus, gained at length so much strength as to attack and expel the usurper from the city. The stratagem by which he regained his power is a singular instance of the force of superstition. He procured a beautiful female to personate the goddess Minerva. Seated on a lofty chariot, she drove into the city, while her attendants proclaimed aloud that their tutelary deity had deigned in person to visit them, and to demand the restoration of her favourite Peisistratus. A general acclamation hailed the auspicious presence, and all paid obedience to the heavenly

summons. Peisistratus thus restored was a second time expelled by the faction of the Alcmæonidæ, and remained for eleven years in exile. But the talents and the virtues of this extraordinary man, for such he really possessed, had gained him many friends; and with their aid he finally triumphed over all his enemies. His return to Athens was marked by a proclamation of general pardon to all who had opposed him, and chose quietly to return to their allegiance; and he regained at once, and continued during the remainder of his life to possess, the favour and affection of the people; leaving at his death a peaceable crown to his sons Hippias and Hipparchus.

Peisistratus was a man of elegant talents, and a zealous encourager of literature. He patronised Simonides and other contemporary poets; and he conferred a memorable service on his country and on the world, by collecting and publishing the hitherto scattered fragments of the poems of Homer.

Peisistratus, much to his honour, had made no alteration on the forms of the republic as established by Solon; and his sons, who inherited their father's spirit and disposition, trod in his footsteps. Thucydides informs us that the only mark of their ascendancy in the state was the appointment of their friends and partisans to the chief offices of the republic. Plato has celebrated the character of Hipparchus as one of the most perfect to be found in history. His principal aim seems to have been to polish and improve his countrymen, by encouraging and cultivating the liberal arts and fostering the literary spirit; while his brother Hippias bent his attention to the finances of the republic, the enlargement and embellishment of the city, and the regulation of its military strength. The circumstances which put an end to their government are variously related by historians; but they agree in this fact, that it was private revenge, and no motive of state policy or patriotism, that incited Harmodius and Aristogeiton to conspire their death. The common story is, that Hipparchus

having debauched the sister of Harmodius, and afterward affronted her while she walked in a public procession, her brother, in revenge for this atrocious injury, with the aid of his friend Aristogeiton, conspired and effected the death of the aggressor. At the celebration of the feast of Minerva, Harmodius attacked and killed Hipparchus, but was himself massacred in the attempt. The character and temper of Hippias, hitherto mild and amiable, underwent a change from the period of his brother's fate. Fear and suspicion made him assume a severity of conduct contrary to his nature; and an extreme rigour in the punishment of all whom he dreaded or suspected, soon rendered his government as odious as it had once been popular.

The faction of the Almæonidæ, who had once succeeded in dethroning Peisistratus, had, upon his restoration, been expelled and banished Attica. They now plotted the dethronement of Hippias, and found the temper of the Athenians favourable to their wishes. The oracle of Delphos was bribed, in order to procure them the aid of the Lacedæmonians. The Pythia continually prophesied, that Sparta would fail in all her enterprises, till she merited the favour of the gods, by delivering Athens from the tyranny of the Peisistratidæ. The Lacedæmonians accordingly declared war, and invaded Attica, headed by their king Cleomenes. Athens surrendered to a superior force, and Hippias, driven into banishment, retired to Sigeum on the Hellespont. The freedom of the city, thus ingloriously restored, was celebrated with high festivity, and statues were erected to the honour of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, as the authors of their country's deliverance from tyranny.

But the popular government was scarcely thus reestablished, when it sustained a new assault from Cleisthenes, one of the Alemæonidæ, who, on the ascendancy of the prevailing faction, had sought to act a similar part with Peisistratus and his sons. He found, however, a powerful rival in Isagoras, who cherished the same ambitious views; and who, with the aid of Cleomenes

and the Spartans, expelled Cleisthenes and drove with him into banishment no less than seven hundred of the principal Athenian families. The selfish schemes of Isagoras were first manifested in an attempt to abolish the senate, or to change all its members and abridge their number. A proceeding thus violent and impolitic roused the people at once. They drove Cleomenes and his Spartans, together with Isagoras, out of Athens, and recalled Cleisthenes with the whole of the exiled families.

The Lacedæmonians, indignant at this disgrace of their king and countrymen, were now wholly bent on revenge. A principal means appeared to be the re-establishment of Hippias, and for that purpose, the other states of Greece, and particularly Corinth, were urged to join in the enterprise. But Corinth loved her own liberty, and respected that of others. She refused to accede to the alliance; and the rest of the states followed her example.

Hippias, disappointed of that aid he expected from the jealousy entertained by the petty states of the predominance of Athens, now looked toward a foreign alliance. Darius the son of Hystaspes, under whom the Persian empire was splendid and flourishing, meditated at this juncture the conquest of Greece. Hippias disgracefully availed himself of the views of an enemy against the general liberty of his country, and courted the assistance of Artaphernes the Persian governor of Sardes, to re-establish him on the throne of Athens. Artaphernes eagerly embraced a proposal which promised effectually to second the views of his sovereign; and Greece now saw herself inevitably involved in a war with Persia.

The subject of the war with Persia naturally induces a retrospective view of the origin of this monarchy; its ancient history, and the government, policy and manners of this great empire; a field of inquiry on which we shall enter in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XI.

ORIGIN OF THE PERSIAN MONARCHY—End of the first Assyrian Empire—Era of Nabonassar—Monarchy of the Medes; Dejoces, Phraortes, Cyaxares, Nabopolassar—Nabuchodonozor II.—Captivity of the Jews—Cyrus the elder—Cambyses—Darius, son of Hystaspes, Conquest of Babylon—His War against the Scythians—His Conquest of India—Government, Customs, and Manners of the Persians—Education of their Princes—General Education of the Persian Youth—National Character of the Persians—Military Character—Government—Administration of Justice—Religion of the Ancient Persians—Zoroaster; Uncertainty of his History—The Second Zoroaster—Translation of the Zendavesta by Anquetil—Cosmogony of the Zendavesta—Manicheeism—Practical and moral parts of the Persian Religion—The Sadder—Change of the Manners of the Persians—State of Greece at the time of the Persian war.

HAVING pursued, in some of the preceding chapters, the general outlines of the history of Greece, from the time when the leading republics of Sparta and Athens had assumed a fixed and regular constitution, to the commencement of the Persian war, I now propose, in conformity with the plan laid down in the beginning of this work, to look back to the origin of the Persian monarchy, to delineate very briefly the early periods of its history, and to exhibit a general view of the government, genius, policy, and manners of this ancient people. Such a retrospect will serve to throw light upon their subsequent history, and familiarize us to their acquaintance when, under Darius, the son of Hystaspes, Xerxes, Artaxerxes, Darius Ochus, and Codomanus, we see the force of that splendid empire opposed to the valour and intrepidity of Greece.

It will be recollected that the first empire of the Assyrians ended under Sardanapalus, when Arbaces, governor of the Medes, and Belesis, governor of Babylon, shook off the yoke of that effeminate prince. Three monarchies arose from the ruins of this empire—that

of Nineveh, or the second Assyrian empire, that of Babylon, and that of the Medes.

To Belesis succeeded Nabonassar, whose accession to the throne is the beginning of an astronomical era, called the Era of Nabonassar. It is fixed 747 years before Jesus Christ, at which time the Chaldæan astronomical observations began, which have been handed down to us by Ptolemy the geographer. The history of the kings of Babylon, succeeding Nabonassar is entirely unknown. That of the monarchs of Nineveh is very little better known, unless by the ravages they committed in Palestine. We read in Scripture of the conquests of Tiglath-pilezer, whom the impious Achaz, king of Judah, had called to his aid against the Israelites; of the conquests of his son Salmanazar, who carried Hosea and the ten tribes of Israel into captivity; of those of Sennacherib, the son of Salmanazar, who was assassinated by his two elder sons, and succeeded by his third, Esarhaddon. With these general facts we are acquainted from the Holy Scriptures,* and we know that, under this last reign, the kingdom of Babylon was united to that of Nineveh, or the second empire of Assyria.

The monarchy of the Medes, the third of those which sprang from the ruins of the first Assyrian empire, appears to have begun later than the other two; for Dejoces, its first sovereign, mounted the throne the same year with Esarhaddon. The history of this Dejoces is extremely uncertain. He is reported to have built the city of Ecbatan, and to have bestowed much pains in polishing and civilizing his people: yet those laws which he is said to have enacted breathed strongly the spirit of despotism. It was common to the Asiatic monarchs very rarely to show themselves to their subjects. Dejoces is said to have carried the haughtiness of his deportment to an un-

* See the Books of Kings, Chronicles, Hosea; likewise Josephus' Hist. and Prideaux' Connex.

usual height. It was death only to smile in his presence. We should be inclined to doubt many of those facts which are recorded of the capricious tyranny of some of the eastern monarchs, were they not transmitted to us by the gravest, and most authentic of the ancient writers.

Dejoces left the crown of Media to his son Phraortes, who conquered the Persians, and subdued a great part of Asia, but was vanquished at length by Nabuchodonozor I., king of Assyria, made prisoner, and put to death. Cyaxares, the son and successor of Phraortes, in alliance with Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, besieged Nineveh, destroyed that splendid capital, and decided the monarchy between them.

The son of Nabopolasser was Nabuchodonozor II., a prince remarkable in those times for his extensive conquests. Necao, (or Pharaoh Necho) king of Egypt, had carried off from the Assyrian monarchy the provinces of Syria and Palestine. They were recovered by Nabuchodonozor and Cyaxares, who, with a vast army of ten thousand chariots, one hundred and eighty thousand foot, and one hundred and twenty thousand horse, invaded, and laid waste the country, besieged Jerusalem, and took its king, Jehoiakim, prisoner. Tyre was likewise taken after a siege of ten months. The allied princes divided their conquests; but we are ignorant of the precise share to each sovereign. To Nabuchodonozor, or, as in Scripture he is named, Nebuchadnezzar, we must assign the dominion of Jerusalem, as it is to him that the seventy years' captivity of the Jews, predicted by Jeremiah, is attributed by the inspired writers. Among the Jewish captives carried by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon was the prophet Daniel, then a youth named Belteshazzar, who attained high favour with the Assyrian monarch, and was made by him ruler of the province of Babylon. From Judea, Nebuchadnezzar pushed his conquests into Egypt, and, dethroning Pharaoh Necho, gave the government of the country to Amazis. The chronology of these events is extremely confused, and

it were a vain and fruitless labour to attempt to fix with precision their order and series. Nebuchadnezzar II., died after a reign of forty-three years, leaving a monarchy more vast than powerful—an object which offered an easy conquest to the Persians, when Cyrus, their king, raised the Persian empire, hitherto a petty and barbarous dominion, to a height superior to that of all the contemporary nations of the earth.

The name of Cyrus is extremely illustrious among ancient writers; yet nothing can be more uncertain than his history. Herodotus, Ctesias, and Xenophon, the latest of whom was not above two centuries posterior to the supposed age of Cyrus, have given accounts of him so extremely contradictory, that it is quite impossible to reconcile them. The Cyrus of Ctesias and Herodotus obtains possession of the empire of the Medes by dethroning his grandfather Astyages, and, like most extensive conquerers, is the terror and scourge of the human race. The Cyrus of Xenophon fights solely in defence of his uncle Cyaxares, the son of Astyages, and is in every respect the model of a great and virtuous prince. The Cyrus of Herodotus is killed, fighting against Tomyris, the queen of the Massagetæ, who plunges his head into a basin of blood, in revenge of her son, whom Cyrus had put to death. The Cyrus of Ctesias is killed by by a wound he received in Hyrcania; and the Cyrus of Xenophon, after a glorious reign of thirty years, dies a natural death. Uncertain as are the particulars of the history of the elder Cyrus, it is generally agreed that his conquests were extensive; that he vanquished the Babylonians; defeated their ally, Crœsus, the king of Lydia, the most powerful of the contemporary sovereigns; subjected a great part of the lower Asia, and made himself master of Syria and Arabia. The policy of such conquerors, who found it impossible to preserve their conquests, was to ruin the countries which they gained by their arms. Devastation was held to be the natural right of war.

Those princes had no plan in their military enterprises—chance directed their course. Nebuchadnezzar II., whom we have seen the conqueror of Judea and Egypt, is said to have cast lots to determine to which point of the compass he should direct his progress: the lot fell toward Jerusalem; he marched on accordingly, and subdued it.

Cambyses, the son and successor of Cyrus, had neither the talents of his father, nor his virtues. He planned a military expedition into Egypt, which was signalized only by folly and extravagance. His vast army speedily overpowered this feeble people, who have been successively subdued by every nation that attacked them; but the conqueror after all reaped nothing but dishonour; but his conduct was such as to bear every mark of insanity. In an inconsiderate expedition against the Ethiopians, he threw away the greater part of his army:—fifty thousand men, shut into the deserts of Ammon, perished through fatigue and famine. With a deliberate purpose of wantonly exasperating the Egyptians, who were disposed to the most peaceable submission, Cambyses ordered the magnificent temple of Thebes to be pillaged and burnt. At the celebration of the festival of Apis, at Memphis, he stabbed the sacred ox with his poniard, ordered the priests to be scourged, and massacred all the people who assisted at the sacrifice. He put to death his brother Smerdis, because he dreamed that he saw him seated on the throne; and when his wife and sister, Meroe, lamented the fate of her brother, he killed her with a stroke of his foot. To prove his dexterity in archery, he pierced the son of his favourite Prexaspes through the heart with an arrow.

This madman was on his return to his dominions of Persia, when he learned that the order of the magi had effected a dangerous revolution; and that, by their aid, one of their own number had assumed the character of his brother Smerdis, and had been elected king in his absence. He hastened to punish this

usurpation, but died on his way, from a wound of his poniard, which struck him in the groin while mounting his horse. The false Smerdis did not long enjoy his dignity. Two grandees of the court, Darius, the son of Hystaspes, and Otanes, conspired to dethrone him, and the usurper was strangled in the imperial palace. Darius had influence enough to obtain the vacant throne of Persia: though we cannot easily rely on the authority of Herodotus, that he owed his election to the neighing of his horse.

Darius the son of Hystaspes was a prince of talents and ambition: he was the first of the Persian monarchs who imposed a regular tax upon the conquered provinces of the empire, which till then had only given occasional gratuities to the sovereign. He chose, however, to conciliate the great body of his subjects to the new government, by exempting the Persians from those burdens. The Babylonians were the first of the provinces which endeavoured to shake off the yoke of servitude; but their attempt cost them extremely dear. Darius encircled Babylon with his army so as to cut off all supplies from the adjacent country. The inhabitants exerted a savage resolution. All who were useless for the defence of the city, and served only to consume its provisions—the women, the old men, and the children—were strangled by a public decree; each head of a family being allowed to preserve one of his wives and a maid-servant. At length, after a siege of twenty months, Darius won the city by a treacherous stratagem. One of his captains, mutilating his visage with hideous wounds, fled, as if for safety, to the Babylonians, and offered his services, to avenge himself against Darius, who had used him thus inhumanly. The man was trusted by the credulous Babylonians with a high command, of which he availed himself to open the gates to the Persians. With aggravated meanness and cruelty Darius impaled alive three thousand of the principal citizens.

Ambitious of extensive conquest, he now meditated

a war against the Scythians, on the absurd pretext that they had ravaged a part of Asia about one hundred and thirty years before. At the head of an army of seven hundred thousand men, he set out from Susa, his capital, to wage war against a nation whom it was impossible to conquer. Detached and wandering tribes, who have scarcely attained an idea of fixed possessions, migrate with ease and celerity from one extremity of a country to the other, and are not to be subdued: while, in the meantime, the invading army, even though unopposed, is consumed of itself by famine and fatigue. The sole business of the Scythians was to retreat, driving their cattle before them, and filling up the wells in their route. The Persians, after long and excessive marches, never got more than a distant sight of the enemy, while they were perishing by thousands in a rugged and barren country. At length Darius thought it his wisest measure to retreat, having lost the greatest part of his army, and leaving behind him the sick and aged at the mercy of the barbarians. The character of this prince was daring, active, and enterprising. The disastrous event of the Scythian war served only to stimulate him to greater and more glorious attempts. He now projected the conquest of India. The particulars of that enterprise are not preserved in history; but we know that it was successfully accomplished. India was made the twentieth province of the Persian empire. In the course of this war, Darius equipped a fleet upon the Indus, under the command of Scylax, a Greek of Caria, with orders to sail down the river and explore the countries on either side till he arrived at the ocean. Scylax obeyed his instructions, and performed, in the course of his voyage, a navigation perhaps the longest that at this time had been attempted by any nation. From the mouth of the Indus, he sailed through the *mare Erythræum*,* coasting, as we must presume, by the

* The *mare Erythræum* is not to be confounded with the

mouth of the Persian gulf; and entering the Red sea by the Sinus Avalates, now the straits of Babelmandel, he disembarked in Egypt after a voyage of above eleven hundred leagues.

The outlines of the Persian monarchy thus shortly traced till the period of the war with Greece—the government, laws, manners, and customs of this great Asiatic empire demand our attention, as an interesting and curious subject of inquiry.

The government of Persia, from the earliest accounts we have of that nation, was an hereditary monarchy. Their princes were absolute in the most unlimited sense of the expression. Their persons were revered as sacred, and they were never approached by their subjects without the gestures of adoration. Their word, their look, conferred life or death; and the displeasure of *The Great King* was equally dreaded with the wrath of the divinity. In the latter and splendid periods of their dominion, the pomp and magnificence of these monarchs, with their necessary concomitants, voluptuousness and debauchery, have been amply described by ancient authors. The revenues of whole provinces, according to Herodotus, were bestowed on the attire of their favourite concubines; and the provinces themselves took from that circumstance their popular appellations. Plato, in his Alcibiades, mentions a Greek ambassador who travelled a whole day through a country called The Queen's Girdle, and another in crossing a province which went by the name of the Queen's Head Dress. The regal throne was of pure gold, overshadowed by a palm-tree and vine of the same metal, with clusters of fruit composed of precious stones.

Red sea. The latter is the *Sinus Arabicus;* the former is that part of the Indian ocean which extends between the straits of Babelmandel and the continent of India. It is said to have been so named from a king called Erythras.

Yet amid this wantonness of Asiatic magnificence, the care which those princes bestowed on the education of their children merited the highest praise. They were, almost as soon as born, removed from the palace, and committed to the charge of eunuchs of approved fidelity and discretion. At seven years of age they learned the exercise of riding, and went daily to the chase, to inure them betimes to fatigue and intrepidity. At the age of fourteen they were put under the care of four preceptors eminently distinguished by their wisdom and abilities. The first opened to them the doctrines of the magi; the second impressed them with a veneration for truth; the third exercised them in the habits of fortitude and magnanimity; and the fourth inculcated the most difficult of all lessons, especially to the great, the perfect command and government of their passions.

It is to be observed that the Persians in general, above every other nation, were noted for their extreme attention to the education of youth. Before the age of five, the children were exclusively under the tuition of the mother and assistant females. After that age, they were committed to the charge of the *magi*, an order of men whose proper function was that of priests or ministers of the national religion, but who spent their lives in the pursuit of wisdom, and the practice of the strictest morality. By their precepts and their example, the Persian youth were early trained to virtue and good morals. They were taught the most sacred regard to truth, the highest veneration for their parents and superiors, the most perfect submission to the laws of their country, and respect for its magistrates. Nor was the culture of the body neglected. The youth were trained to every manly exercise; a preparative to their admission into the body of the king's guards, in which they were enrolled at the age of seventeen. The general system of education among the Persians is thus laconically described by Herodotus: "From the age of five to that of twenty, they

teach their children three things alone—to manage a horse, to use a bow with dexterity, and to speak truth." From these accounts of ancient authors, we might be led to conclude, that a system of education thus public, left very little to be done on the part of the parents; yet we find in the *Zendavesta* this admirable precept to fathers: "If you desire to enjoy paradise, instruct your children in wisdom and virtue; since all their good deeds will be imputed to you."

The luxury of the Persians, which has become proverbial, must not mislead us in our ideas of their character in the earlier ages of that monarchy. In reality, before the time of Cyrus, the Persians were a rude and barbarous people, inhabiting a poor and narrow country of rocks and deserts. We have the concurrent testimony of all the ancient authors who have written concerning them, that they were, in those early periods, a people remarkable for their temperance, and the virtuous simplicity of their manners. Herodotus records an excellent speech of one Sandanis, a Lydian, who, when his sovereign Crœsus projected the invasion of Persia, thus strongly pointed out to him the folly of his enterprise: "What will you gain," said he, "by waging war with such men as the Persians? Their clothing is skins, their food wild fruits, and their drink water. If you are conquered, you lose a cultivated country; if you conquer them, what can you take from them?—a barren region. For my part, I thank the gods, that the Persians have not yet formed the design of invading the Lydians."

The use of gold and silver for money was unknown to the Persians till the reign of Darius, the son of Cyaxeres, or, as he is called in Scripture, *Darius the Mede*. The reign of this prince was, indeed, the era of their change of manners. The Medes, conquered by the Persians, became the models of their manners, as we shall see did the Greeks to the Romans. The ancient Persians were a warlike and a hardy race of men. They were all trained to the use of arms, and

in time of war, every male, unless disabled by age or bodily infirmity, was obliged, on pain of death, to attend the monarch in the field. Hence those immense armies, whose numbers almost exceed belief, and which were, of necessity, disorderly and unmanageable, as they never could act with the uniform operation of a well-organized body. While on service, they wore complete armour, composed of loose plates of metal, fashioned in the form of the scales of fishes, which covered the whole body, arms, legs, thighs, and feet. Their weapons were a bow of uncommon length, a quiver of arrows, a short sword, called *acinacis*, and a shield made of wicker. Their horses were covered with the same scaly armour; and they employed war-chariots, with scythes fixed at the extremity of the axles. They received no other pay than a share of the conquered spoil. In their military expeditions, the wives and children, with a large retinue of male and female slaves, followed the camp; an usage which we are apt to attribute to luxury and effeminacy, when we ought rather, perhaps, to account it a remnant of barbarous manners. In fight, the ancient Persians displayed great personal courage. They esteemed it dishonourable to employ any stratagems in war; and never fought in the night, unless when attacked by the enemy.

We find in the government of the ancient Persians, though extremely despotical, some particular institutions of uncommon excellency. The kingdom was divided into districts or separate provinces, over each of which presided a governor or *satrap*, who received his instructions immediately from the prince, and was obliged, at stated times, to give an account of his administration. To facilitate this intercourse between the provinces and the capital, the establishments of regular couriers or posts, a piece of policy of no ancient date in the kingdoms of Europe, was known in Persia at the time of Cyrus. The sovereign likewise appointed his commissioners to perform periodical cir-

cuits through the empire, and report to him every particular relative to the government of the satraps; and he frequently visited in person even the most distant provinces.

The encouragement of agriculture, the spring of population, and therefore one of the most important objects of attention in all governments where there is an extent of territory, was peculiarly the care of the monarchs of Persia. To cultivate the earth was one of the precepts of their sacred books; and the industry of the people, thus recommended by the sanction of a religious duty, was encouraged by the sovereign with suitable rewards, and remissness punished by a proportionable increase of taxes. We are informed that, on one particular day of the year, the king partook in person of the feast of the husbandmen.

There were, under the Persian government, some regulations regarding the administration of justice, which are highly deserving of encomium. The rigour of penal laws often defeats its own purpose, for if the punishment exceeds its just measure, and the criminal becomes an object of pity, the influence of punishment as an example is in a great measure defeated; and offences, instead of being strictly coerced, will often be screened from the too severe vengeance of the law. In Persia, a first offence was never capitally punished. That vengeance was reserved only for the hardened and incorrigible criminal. In all cases the accused person was brought face to face with his accuser, who, if he failed to make good his charge, was himself condemned to the punishment which the accused must have undergone had the crime been proved against him. The sovereign, in certain causes of importance, sat himself in judgment; though in the ordinary administration of justice, there were a certain number of judges chosen, on account of their acknowledged wisdom and probity, who made regular circuits through the provinces, and attended the sovereign in his stated visitations of his dominions. These held their offices

for life; but were removable in cases of malversation. The story is well known of the judge, who being guilty of corruption in his high function, was by Cambyses condemned to be flayed alive, and his skin hung over the seat of judgment.

There are few topics of antiquarian research which have been explored with more anxiety of investigation than the religion of the ancient Persians. The mind is naturally stimulated to inquire into a system of theology, which is not the less remarkable for the purity of its moral precepts than for its extreme antiquity; as we have undoubted evidence that the same doctrines and worship which exist among a particular sect of the Persians at this day were the religion of this ancient people some thousand years ago.

The founder of this ancient religion is generally supposed to have been Zoroaster, as he is called by the Greeks, or Zerdusht, as he is denominated by the Persians; but the history of this personage is involved in much uncertainty. By some authors he is said to have lived before the time of Moses (A. C. 1571); by others, to have been contemporary with Ninus and Semiramis (A. C. 1216); and by others again his era is placed as late as the accession of Darius, the son of Hystaspes, to the throne of Persia (A. C. 522). These discordances have induced a supposition, that there were two remarkable persons of the name of Zoroaster; and this, which is the opinion of the elder Pliny, has been lately supported with many probable reasons by the Abbe Foucher. According to his notion, the elder Zoroaster was regarded by the Persians as the founder of their religion; while the younger of that name was only a zealous reformer of that ancient worship from the many superstitions with which, in course of time, it had become corrupted. To the first Zoroaster is attributed the composition of the *Zendavesta*, a collection of books which he pretended, like the Roman Numa, to have received from Heaven. These books he presented to his sovereign Gustashp, the king of

Bactriana; and confirmed their authority, and his own divine mission, by performing, as is said, some very extraordinary miracles. Gustashp became a convert, and abjured, along with the greater part of his subjects, the worship of the stars, represented by several idols, which was then the prevalent religion of those countries, and was termed *Sabaism*. Gustashp became so zealous a proselyte to the new faith, that he refused to pay an annual tribute to a prince of Scythia, unless on the condition that he likewise should renounce his idolatry; a request which the Scythian deemed so insolent, that he invaded Bactriana with an immense army, sacked the city of Balk, destroyed the *Pyreum*, or Fire-Temple, in which Zoroaster officiated, and put him to death, together with eighty of the magi,* whose blood, as is reported, drowned out the sacred fire. But Gustashp had his revenge; for, collecting all his forces, he attacked and routed the Scythians with immense slaughter, regained his kingdom, and re-establishing the Pyreum of Zoroaster, put his religion upon a settled foundation.

The second Zoroaster appears with less splendour. He pretends to no other character than that of a zeal-

* The *magi* among the Persians were a class of men, who, like an established order of priesthood, exercised all the public functions of religion, and passed their time exclusively in those sacred duties, and in the cultivation of philosophy. Whether they were originally instituted by Zoroaster, as the priests of his religion, or subsisted before his time, while Sabaism was the religion of the Persians, is uncertain. They were not elected from the body of the people, but formed a distinct class or race of men; the children of the magi succeeding to the function of their fathers; and being debarred from intermarrying with the people, these children are said to have been frequently the fruit of incestuous intercourse.--*Bruckeri Inst. Hist. Phil.* p. 49. They held a great many mysterious and abstruse doctrines, which they communicated only to the disciples of their own order; but made it likewise their employment to educate the youth of superior rank, and particularly the princes of royal descent, and to instruct them in morality and useful knowledge.

ous reformer, concerned for the ancient purity of his religion, which, in the course of many ages from the time of its founder, had become considerably corrupted. The whole order of the magi had, in the time of Cambyses, fallen into disrepute. We have seen how, from a very dishonourable imposition in substituting one of their own number for Smerdis, the brother of Cambyses, whom that madman had put to death, they had incurred the odium of the whole nation. This event is said to have thrown a stain upon the religion of the Zandavesta, which was not wiped off till a reformation was operated by Darius, the son of Hystaspes. This prince was zealously attached to the ancient religion of Zoroaster; but knowing the unpopularity of the race of magi then existing, he abolished them entirely, and created a new order, at the head of which was the second Zerdusht or Zoroaster. He is believed to have been originally a Jew, or at least a person educated in Judea; whence he has grafted on the religion of the Persians a great deal of the doctrines of the Old Testament, both regarding the creation of the wo ld, and the precepts of religion.

The Zendavesta, therefore, in the form in which it now appears, must be considered as a work of which the basis claims a most remote antiquity; while even what addition or improvement it received from the younger Zoroaster is of a date so ancient as 500 years before the birth of Christ.

This code of the ancient religion of the Persians, so remarkable for its antiquity, was, till lately, unknown, unless from some abstracts of its doctrines made by a few learned men who were conversant in oriental literature. But it has been lately translated by a Frenchman, M. Anquetil de Perron, whose enthusiasm prompted him to undertake a journey to Persia, in order to explore every trace of that ancient religion. This translation has not contributed to raise the reputation of the Zendavesta. We find in it some excellent moral precepts, and a few sublime truths acci-

dentally breaking out, amid a mass of absolute nonsense and incoherent raving. Those, however, who, with a strong prejudice in its favour, have endeavoured to make a critical analysis of the work, and to methodise its opinions and doctrines, pretend to find in it not only a philosophical account of the origin of the world, but the purest principles of religion and morality, together with a code of laws for the regulation of civil society.

The cosmogony of tne Zendavesta, according to the account of these expositors, supposes the first principle of all things to be time without bounds, or *eternity*. From this first principle proceed (but in what manner is not explained) the first *light*, the first *water*, and the original *fire*. From this first principle likewise sprung *Ormusd* and *Ahriman*, secondary principles, but active and creative of all things; Ormusd, a being infinitely good, and Ahriman, a being infinitely wicked. The duration of this world is limited to 12,000 years; a space of time which is equally divided between Ormusd and Ahriman, who maintain a constant war for the sovereignty of created nature, and alternately prevail during the period of the duration of the universe; but the contest is to be finally terminated by the triumph of Ormusd over Ahriman; good must subdue evil.

In the meantime, for maintaining their warfare, Ormusd creates an immense number of *good genii*, and his opponent an equal number of *evil* ones. Ormusd then proceeds to the creation of a perfect world; but is continually thwarted in his purpose, and has his works contaminated, by the malignant interference of his adversary. Ormusd creates a *bull*, out of the body of which spring first all the different kinds of plants, and then all the various species of animals; man among the rest. But in this formation of the bull, Ahriman has likewise a joint operation; so that man, intended to be formed pure, uncorrupted, and immortal, has within him the seeds of impurity, corruption,

and death. He deviates, of course, from the path of rectitude, and falls from his pristine innocence. His first offence is the neglect to pay a proper veneration to Ormusd under the symbol of water; a crime which entails sin and mortality against all the descendants of the aggressor, and gives a great triumph to Ahriman and his evil *genii.*

These contentions between the good and the evil principle are supposed to endure till the accomplishment of Time. Man becomes subject to death in consequence of his sins; but when the period arrives, that the whole inhabitants of the earth shall be converted to the religion of Zoroaster, then shall be the resurrection of the dead with their earthly bodies and souls. The just shall be separated from the unjust; the former to be translated to Paradise, where they shall enjoy the highest pleasures, both of soul and body; the latter to be purified for an appointed space in burning metals, and cleansed from all their offences; after which, all created beings shall enjoy the most perfect happiness for ever. Ahriman and his evil genii shall undergo the same purification; and after his limited punishment, even he shall partake of the joys of eternity, repeat the Zendavesta, and join with all beings in the praises of Ormusd.

This doctrine of the two separate and eternal principles, a good and an evil, has had its advocates among many other religious sects besides the ancient Persians. It seems to be a natural effort of unenlightened reason to afford a solution of that great problem, the origin of evil. It was revived in the third century of the Christian era by a sect of heretics termed Manichees,* whose doctrine the sceptical Bayle has

* This sect arose about A. D. 277, and took its origin from one of the Persian Magi named *Manes.* He professed to believe in Christianity, and in the principal doctrines of the New Testament: rejecting altogether the Old Testament, which he maintained was one of the delusions which had sprung from Ahriman, or the *evil principle,* for the purpose of keeping

defended with much dangerous sophistry. But his arguments, and all others that are applicable to this controversy, tend to nothing else than to convince us of the imperfection of human reason, and the vain folly of man's pretences to subject to his limited understanding the schemes of Providence, or reconcile in every instance those anomalies which appear in the structure both of the physical and moral world.

Such is the system of cosmogony contained in these books of the Zendavesta, upon which the whole religion of the ancient *Parsi* was founded. The practical part of this religion consisted, first, in acknowledging and adoring Ormusd, the principle of all good, by a strict observance of purity in thought, words, and actions: secondly, in showing a proportional detestation of Ahriman, his productions and his works. The most acceptable service to Ormusd was observing the precepts of the Zendavesta, reading that work, and repeating its liturgies. The chief among its forms of prayer are addressed not directly to Ormusd, but through the medium of his greatest works, the sun, the moon, and stars. Mithras the sun, of all the productions of Ormusd, is supposed to be the most powerful antagonist of Ahriman. After these celestial objects, the terrestrial elements have the next claim

mankind in darkness, ignorance, and vice. For that reason it was, as he maintained, that in the course of the contest which always subsists between *the good and the evil principles*—the good principle, under the person of Mithras or Christ, had abrogated the Old Testament, and revealed his perfect religion and worship in the New. Yet though the Manichees professed to receive the New Testament, they adopted in reality only what suited their own opinions. They formed a peculiar scheme of Christianity, which was mingled with many of the doctrines of the Magi; and whatever parts of the New Testament they found to be inconsistent with their scheme, they boldly affirmed to be corruptions and interpolations. This sect of the Manichees subsisted for many centuries, and even some of the earlier fathers of the Christian church were contaminated with its errors.

to worship and veneration. Of these, the noblest is the fire, the symbol of the sun, and of the original heat which pervades all nature. The fire was therefore reckoned the purest material symbol of the divinity. The other elements of air, earth, and water, had each a subordinate respect paid to them; and it was an object of the most zealous care of the ancient Parsi, to keep them pure and uncorrupted. But this worship of the fire and the other elements was always inferior and subordinate to the adoration of Ormusd, with whose praises all their religious ceremonies began and ended.

But the object of these books of the Zendavesta was not only to reveal the divinity, and the knowledge of his works, and that peculiar worship which was most acceptable to him: they contained likewise a system of moral duties, and of civil regulations. These moral precepts and regulations are better known from the *Sadder*, a compilation made about three centuries ago by the modern Parsi, or Guebres, in which a great many of the absurdities contained in the Zendavesta are rejected or omitted.

From the Sadder, according to the analysis of it by M. Foucher, it appears that the principle of the morality of the Parsi was a sort of Epicurism. The indulgence of the passions was recommended, in so far as it is consistent with the welfare of society; and reprobated only when destructive or subversive of it. There is no merit annexed to abstinence or mortification; these extremes are equally reprobated with intemperance and debauchery. Adultery was held criminal, and so was celibacy or virginity. Murder, theft, violence, and injustice, were crimes highly offensive to God, because destructive to the happiness of man. To cultivate an untilled field, to plant fruit-trees, to destroy noxious animals, to bring water to a dry and barren land, were all actions beneficial to mankind, and therefore most agreeable to the divinity,

who wills perpetually the highest happiness of his creatures.

In a word, this religion of Zoroaster, delivered in the books of the Zendavesta, and abridged in the Sadder, which is still the code of belief and of worship among the Guebres, a sect of the modern Persians, appears to contain, along with a very erroneous system of theology, and amid a mass of unfathomable incongruities and absurdities, some very striking truths, and many precepts of morality and practical rules of conduct which would do honour to the most enlightened Christians.

I have thus endeavoured to give some idea of the genius and character of the ancient Persians, who were a people remarkable for a temperance and simplicity of manners, very different from the character they assumed after they had become a great and conquering nation. No people was ever more prone to adopt foreign customs or foreign manners. They no sooner subdued the Medes than they assumed their dress; after conquering Egypt, they used the Egyptian armour; and after becoming acquainted with the Greeks, they imitated them, as Herodotus informs us, in the worst of their vices. But that they were originally a very different people, all ancient authors bear concurring testimony.

At the time when they engaged in the war with Greece, their national character had undergone an entire change. They were a people corrupted by luxury: their armies, immense in their numbers, were a disorderly assemblage of all the tributary nations they had subdued; Medes, Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, mingled with the native Persians; a discordant mass, of which the component parts had no tie of affection which bound them to a common interest.

Athens at this time had asserted her liberty by the expulsion of the Peisistratidæ, and was disposed to put a high value on her newly-purchased freedom. The power and strength of the republic were at this

time very considerable. Luxury had not yet spread her contagion on the public manners; and the patriotic flame was fervent in all ranks of the people. Even the slaves, who, as we before remarked, formed the chief mass of the population of the state, were an active and serviceable body of men; for being ever treated with humanity by the free citizens, they felt an equal regard for the common interest, and on every occasion of war armed with the spirit of citizens for the defence of their country. The Lacedæmonians had the same love of liberty, the same ardour of patriotism, and were yet more accustomed to warfare than the Athenians. In the contest with Persia, the spirit of the Greeks was raised to its utmost pitch; and it is in fact from this era that the Greeks, as a united people, begins to occupy the chief place in the history of the nations of antiquity.

BOOK THE SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

History of Greece, continued—Origin and cause of the War with Persia—Commencement of hostilities—Battle of Marathon—Miltiades—Aristides—Themistocles—Invasion of Greece by Xerxes—Banishment of Aristides—Thermopylæ—Salamis—Platæa and Mycale—Disunion of the Greeks—Cimon—Pericles—Decline of the patriotic spirit.

Having in the last chapter given a short retrospective view of the origin of the Persian monarchy, and the outlines of its history down to the period of the war with Greece—together with a brief account of the government, manners, laws, and religion of the ancient Persians;—we now proceed to carry on the detail of the Grecian history, by shortly tracing the progress and issue of that important war, which may be said to have owed its origin to the ambition of Darius the son of Hystaspes, heightened by the passion of revenge. The Ionians, a people of the lesser Asia, originally a Greek colony, had, with the other colonies of Æolia and Caria, been subdued by Crœsus, and annexed to his dominions of Lydia. On the conquest of Lydia by Cyrus, these provinces of course became a part of the great empire of Persia. They were impatient, however, of this state of subjection, and eagerly sought to regain their former freedom. For this purpose, they sought the aid of their ancient countrymen of Greece, applying first to Lacedæmon, then considered as the predominant power; but, being unsuccessful in that quarter, they made the same demand, with better success, on Athens and the islands

of the Ægean Sea. Athens and the islands equipped and furnished the Ionians with twenty-five ships of war, which immediately began hostilities on every city on the Asian coast that acknowledged the government of Persia. We remarked in a former chapter,* that after the expulsion of the Peisistratidæ from Athens, Hippias, the last of that family, betook himself to the Lacedæmonians, who, pleased with the opportunity of harassing their rival state, had ineffectually endeavoured to form a league with the other nations of Greece for replacing Hippias on the throne of Athens. As this project soon became abortive, Hippias had betaken himself for aid to Artaphernes, the Persian governor of Lydia, then resident at Sardis, its capital city. This satrap eagerly embraced a scheme which coincided with the views of his master Darius, who, enraged at the revolt of the Ionians, and the aid they had found from Athens and the Greek islands, meditated nothing less than the conquest of all Greece. The Ionians, with their Athenian allies, ravaged and burnt the city of Sardis, destroying the magnificent temple of Cybele, the tutelary goddess of the country; but the Persians defeated them with great slaughter, and compelled the Athenians hastily to re-embark their troops at Ephesus, glad to make the best of their way to Greece. This insult, however, sunk deep into the mind of Darius, and from that moment he vowed the destruction of Greece. That his resolution might suffer no delay or abatement, he caused a crier to proclaim every day when he sat down to table, "Great sovereign, remember the Athenians." Previously to the commencement of his expedition, he sent, according to a national custom, two heralds into the country which he intended to invade, who in their master's name demanded earth and water, the usual symbols of subjection. The insolence of this requisition provoked the Athenians and Spartans into a violation of

* Book I. chap. x. *in fine.*

the law of civilized nations. They granted the request of the ambassadors by throwing one of them into a ditch, and the other into a well.*

Many others, however, of the cities of Greece, and all the islands, intimated by the great armament of Darius, to which they had nothing effectual to oppose, sent the tokens of submission. But the Persian fleet of three hundred ships, commanded by Mardonius, being wrecked in doubling the promontory of Mount Athos, (a peninsula which juts out into the Ægean from the southern coast of Macedonia,) this disaster gave spirits to the inhabitants of the islands, who now returned to their allegiance to the mother-country, and cheerfully exerted all their powers in a vigorous opposition to the common enemy.

A new fleet of 600 sail was now equipped by Darius, which began hostilities by an attack on the isle of Naxos. Its principal city, with its temples, was burnt to the ground, and the inhabitants were sent in chains to Susa. Many of the other islands underwent the same fate; and an immense army was landed in Eubœa, which, after plundering and laying waste the country, poured down with impetuosity upon Attica. It was conducted by Datis, a Mede, who, under the guidance of the traitor Hippias, led them on toward Marathon, a small village near the coast, and within ten miles of the city of Athens.

The Athenians, in this critical juncture, armed to a man. Even the slaves of the republic were enrolled, and cheerfully gave their services for the common defence of the country. A hasty demand of aid was made upon the confederate states, but the suddenness of the emergency left no time for effectually answering it. The Platæans sent a thousand men, the whole strength of their small city. The Spartans delayed to march, from an absurd superstition of beginning no enterprise till after the full moon. The Athenians,

* Herodot. l. vii. c. 133.

therefore, may be said to have stood alone to repel this torrent. The amount of their whole army was only ten thousand men; the army of the Persians consisted of one hundred thousand foot, and ten thousand horse—a vast inequality.

The Athenians, with a very injudicious policy, had given the command of the army to ten chiefs, with equal authority. The mischiefs of this divided power were soon perceived. Happily, among these commanders was one man of superior powers of mind, to whose abilities and conduct all the rest by common consent paid a becoming deference. This was Miltiades. The Athenians for some time deliberated whether it was their best policy to shut themselves up in the city, and there sustain the attack of the Persians, or to take the field. The former measure could only have been thought of in regard of their great inferiority in numbers to the assailing foe. But there is scarcely an inequality of force that may not be compensated by resolution and intrepidity. By the counsel of Miltiades and Aristides, it was resolved to face the enemy in the field. Aristides, when it was his turn to command, yielded his authority to Miltiades; and the other chiefs, without scruple, followed his example.

Miltiades drew up his little army at the foot of a hill, which covered both the flanks, and frustated all attempts to surround him. They knew the alternative was victory or death, and that all depended on a vigorous effort to be made in one moment; for a lengthened conflict was sure destruction. The Greeks, therefore, laying aside all missile weapons, trusted everything to the sword. At the word of command, instead of the usual discharge of javelins, they rushed at once upon the enemy with the most desperate impetuosity. The disorder of the Persians from this furious and unexpected assault was instantly perceived by Miltiades, and improved to their destruction by a charge made by both the wings of the Athenian army,

in which with great judgment he had placed the best of his troops. The army of the Persians was broken in a moment: their immense numbers increased their confusion, and the whole were put to flight. A great carnage ensued. Six thousand three hundred were left dead on the field of Marathon; and among these the ignoble Hippias, whose criminal ambition would have sacrificed and enslaved his country. The Athenians in this day of glory lost only a hundred and ninety men. The Spartans came the day after the battle to witness the triumph of their rival state.

The event of this remarkable engagement dissipated the terror of the Persian name; and this first successful experiment of their strength was a favourable omen to the Greeks of the final issue of the contest. With presumptuous confidence, the Persians had brought marble from Asia to erect a triumphal monument on the subjugation of their enemies. The Athenians caused a statue of Nemesis, the Goddess of Vengeance, to be formed out of this marble, by the celebrated Phidias; and tablets to be erected, on which were recorded the names of the heroes who had fallen in the fight. Among the Arundelian marbles at Oxford is a *Psephisma*, or decree, of the people of Athens, published on occasion of the battle of Marathon. The Athenians likewise caused a large painting to be executed by Panæus, the brother of Phidias, in which Miltiades was represented at the head of his fellow-chiefs haranguing the army. This was the first emotion of Athenian gratitude to the man who had saved his country. But merit, the more it was eminent and illustrious, became the more formidable, or, to use a juster phrase, the more the object of envy and detraction to this fickle people. Miltiades, charged with the command of reducing some of the revolted islands, executed his commission with honour, with respect to most of them; but he was unsuccessful in an attack against the isle of Paros. He was dangerously wounded; the enterprise miscarried; and he

returned to Athens. With the most shocking ingratitude he was capitally tried for treason, on an accusation brought against him by his political antagonist Xanthippus, of his having taken Persian gold to betray his country. Unable, from his wound, to appear in person, his cause was ably pleaded in the Ecclesia by his brother Tisagoras; but all he could obtain was a commutation of the punishment of death into a fine of fifty talents (about $41,700), a sum which being utterly unable to pay, he was thrown into a prison, where he died of his wounds.

The Persian monarch, meantime, had been only the more exasperated by his bad success; and he now prepared to invade Greece with all the power of Asia. It was the fortune of Athens, notwithstanding her ingratitude, still to nourish virtuous and patriotic citizens. Such was Aristides, who, at this important period, had the greatest influence in conducting the affairs of the republic;—a man of singular abilities—whose extreme moderation, and a mind superior to all the allurements of selfish ambition, had deservedly fixed on him the epithet of THE JUST.

Themistocles, who in many respects was of a very opposite character from Aristides, was the jealous rival of his honours and reputation. Both of these eminent men sought the glory of their country; the one from a disinterested spirit of virtuous patriotism, the other from the ambitious desire of unrivalled eminence in that state which he labored successfully to aggrandize. Themistocles bent his whole attention, in this critical situation of his country, to ward off the storm which he saw threatened from Persia. Sensible that a powerful fleet was the first object of importance for the defence of a country everywhere open to invasion from the sea, he procured the profits of the silver mines belonging to the republic to be employed in equipping an armament of a hundred long galleys.*

* The sagacious Themistocles did not disdain to avail himself of the superstitious spirit of his countrymen in aid of his

In this interval happened the death of Darius: he was succeeded by his son Xerxes, whom he had by Atossa, the daughter of Cyrus. The heir of his father's ambition, but not of his abilities, Xerxes adopted with impetuosity the project of the destruction of Greece, and armed an innumerable multitude—as Herodotus says, above five millions of men—for that expedition; a calculation utterly incredible—but which serves at least to mark a number, though uncertain, yet altogether prodigious. The error of this estimate becomes palpable, when we attend to the number of ships by which this force was to be transported. These were twelve hundred ships-of-war, and three thousand transports.

The impatience of Xerxes could not brook the delay that would have attended the transportation of this immense body of land forces in his fleet across the Ægean, which is a very dangerous navigation, or even by the narrower sea of the Hellespont. He ordered a bridge of boats to be constructed between Sestos and Abydos, a distance of seven furlongs (seven eighths of a mile). This structure was no sooner completed, than it was demolished by a tempest. In revenge of this insult to his power, the directors of the work were beheaded, and the outrageous element itself was punished, by throwing into it a pair of iron fetters, and bestowing three hundred lashes upon the water. After this childish ceremony, a new bridge was built, consisting of a double range of vessels fixed by strong anchors, and joined to each other by immense cables. On this structure the main body of the army passed, in the space of seven days and nights. It was necessary that the fleet should attend the motions of the army; and to avoid a disaster similar to that which had happened to the armament under Mardonius, Xerxes ordered the promontory of Athos to be cut

wise precautions. The Delphic Oracle, consulted on the fate of the country, answered that the Greeks would owe their safety to *wooden walls*.

through, by a canal of sufficient breadth to allow two ships to sail abreast. This fact, though confidently asserted by Herodotus, Thucydides, and Diodorus, the first actually contemporary with the event, has yet so much the air of romance, that it has been classed among the fables of ancient history:—

> "———— creditur olim
> Velificatus Athos, et quicquid Græcia mendax
> Audet in historia:—"*

and modern travellers who have surveyed the ground, assert that it exhibits no vestiges of such an operation.

The object of Xerxes' expedition was professedly the chastisement of Athens, for the aid she had given to his revolted subjects of the lesser Asia; but the prodigious force which he set in motion had beyond doubt the conquest of all Greece for its real purpose. If Athens then took the principal part in this contest, and finally prevailed in it, we cannot hesitate to assent to the opinion expressed by Herodotus, that to this magnanimous Republic all Greece was indebted for her freedom and existence as a nation.

But Athens herself was at this very time the prey of domestic faction, and was divided between the partizans of Themistocles and Aristides. The former could no longer bear the honours and reputation of his rival. By industriously disseminating reports to his prejudice, and representing that very moderation which was the shining feature of his character, as a mere device to gain popularity, and the artful veil of the most dangerous, because the most disguised ambition, he so poisoned the mind of the people that they insisted for the judgment of the ostracism; the consequence was, that the virtuous Aristides was banished for ten years from his country.

* It is believed that Athos was formerly sailed through; and whatever else lying Greece has had the effrontery to put forth in history.

Such was the situation of Athens while Xerxes had mustered his prodigious host upon the plains of Thessaly. The greater part of the states of Greece either stood aloof in this crisis of the national fate, or meanly sent to the Persian monarch the demanded symbols of submission. Even Lacedæmon, though expressing a determined resolution of defence against the common enemy, sent no more effective force to join the Athenian army than three hundred men, but these, as we shall see, were a band of heroes. The Corinthians, Thespians, Platæans, and Æginetes contributed each a small contingent.

Xerxes now proceeded by rapid marches toward the pass of Thermopylæ,* a very narrow defile upon the bay of Malia, which divides Thessaly from the territories of Phocis and Locris. In a council of war, held by the Greeks, it was thought of a great importance to attempt at least to defend this pass; and a body of six thousand men being destined for that purpose, Leonidas, one of the kings of Sparta, of high reputation for his cool and deliberate courage, was appointed to command them on this desperate service. He was perfectly aware that his fate was inevitable, and there are some facts which evince that he and his followers had resolutely determined to devote themselves for their country. An oracle had declared that either Sparta or her king must perish. Plutarch relates, that, before leaving Lacedæmon, this chosen band of patriots, with their king at their head, celebrated their own funeral games in the sight of their wives and mothers. When the wife of Leonidas bade him adieu, and asked his last commands; "My

* This defile was called *Thermopylæ* from the hot springs in its vicinity. It is bounded on the west by high precipices which join the lofty ridge of mount Oeta, and on the east is terminated by an impracticable morass extending to the sea. Near the plain of the Thessalian city, Trachis, the passage was fifty feet in breath, but at Alpene, the narrower part of the defile, there was not room for one chariot to pass another.

desire," said he, "is, that you should marry some brave man and bring him brave children." On the morning of the engagement, when Leonidas, exhorting his troops to take some refreshment, said that they should all sup with Pluto, with one accord they set up a shout of joy, as if they had been invited to a banquet. He took his post in the defile with admirable skill, and drew up his little army to the best advantage possible. After some fruitless attempts on the part of the Persians to corrupt the virtue of this noble Spartan, Xerxes imperiously summoned him to lay down his arms. "Let him come," said Leonidas, "and take them." Twenty thousand Medes were ordered to force the defile, but were repulsed with dreadful slaughter by the brave Lacedæmonians. A chosen body of the Persians, dignified with the vain epithet of the *immortals*, met with the same fate. For two whole days, successive bands of the Persians were cut to pieces in making the same attempt. At length, by the treachery of some of the Thessalians who had sold their services to Xerxes, a secret and unfrequented track was pointed out to the Persians, through which a pass might be gained by the army over the mountainous ridge which overhangs the defile; and through this path a great part of the Persian troops penetrated in the night to the opposite plain. The defence of the straits was now a fruitless endeavour; and Leonidas, foreseeing certain destruction, ordered the greater part of his force to retreat with speed and save themselves, while he, with his three hundred Spartans, and a few Thespians and Thebans, determined to maintain their position to the last extremity. Their magnanimous motive was to give the Persians a just idea of the spirit of that foe whom they vainly hoped to subdue. They were all cut off, to one man who brought the news to Sparta, where he was treated with ignominy as a cowardly fugitive, till he wiped off that disgrace in the subsequent battle of Platæa.

The assembly of the Amphictyons decreed that a monument should be erected at Thermopylæ, on the spot where those brave men had fallen, and that famous inscription to be engraven on it, written by the poet Simonides in the true spirit of Lacedæmonian simplicity:—

> Ω ξειν' αγγειλον Λακεδαιμονιοις ὁτι τῃδε
> Κειμεθα τοις κεινων ῥημασι πειθομενοι.

> "O strangers, tell it to the Lacedæmonians,
> that we lie here in obedience to her precepts."

Xerxes continued his march. It was at this time the period of the celebration of the Olympic games, and the national danger did not interrupt that solemnity; a fact which will admit of very opposite inferences: yet it was interpreted by Xerxes to the honour of the Greeks, for it struck him with the utmost astonishment. The Persian army proceeded without opposition to ravage the country in their progress toward Attica. The territory of Phocis was destroyed with fire and sword; the greater part of the inhabitants flying for shelter to the rocks and caves of that mountainous country. The town of Delphi, famous for its oracle, was a tempting object of plunder, from the treasures accumulated in its temple. These were saved by the laudable artifices of the priests. After ordering the inhabitants of the town to quit their houses, and fly with their wives and children to the mountains, these men, from their skill in that species of legerdemain which can work miracles upon the rude and ignorant, contrived by artificial thunders and lightnings, accompanied with horrible noises, while vast fragments of rock hurled from the precipices gave all the appearances of an earthquake, to create such terror in the assailing Persians, that they firmly believed the divinity of the place had inter-

fered to protect his temple, and fled with dismay from the sacred territory.

The invading army pursued its march toward Attica. The Greeks now afforded a melancholy proof of that general weakness which characterizes a country parcelled out into small states, each jealous of each other's power, and selfishly attached to its petty interests, in preference even to those concerns which involved the very existence of the nation. The dread of the Persian power, thus in the very act of overwhelming the country, instead of operating a magnanimous union of its strength to resist the common enemy, produced, at this juncture, a quite contrary effect. The rest of the states of Greece, struck with panic, and many of them even siding with the invaders,* seemed determined to leave Athens to her fate, which now appeared inevitable. Themistocles himself, seeing no other safety for his countrymen, counselled them to abandon the city, and betake themselves to their fleet: a melancholy extreme, but, in their present situation, absolutely necessary. Those who from age were incapable of bearing arms, together with the women and children, were hastily conveyed to the islands of Salamis and Ægina. A few of the citizens resolutely determined to remain, and to defend the citadel to the last extremity. They were all cut off, and the citadel burnt to the ground.

Themistocles, to whatever motive his character may incline us to attribute his conduct, now acted a truly patriotic part. The Spartans had a very small share of the fleet, which belonged principally to the Athenians. With singular moderation, as avowing his own inferiority of skill, Themistocles yielded the command of the fleet to Eurybyades, a Spartan. He made a yet greater effort of patriotism. Forgetting all petty jealousies, he publicly proposed the recall, from ban-

* This disgraceful fact is asserted in express terms by Herodotus, lib. viii. c. 73.

ishment, of the virtuous Aristides, whose abilities and high character, he foresaw, might, at this important juncture, be of essential service to his country.

Two sea engagements were fought with little advantage on either side: and the Greek fleet returned to the straits of Salamis, between that island and the coast of Attica.

A woman of a singularly heroic character, Artemisia, queen of Halicarnassus, from a pure spirit of enterprise, had joined the fleet of Xerxes with a small squadron which she commanded in person. The prudence of this woman's counsels, had they been followed, might have saved the Persian monarch the disaster and disgrace that awaited him. She recommended Xerxes to confine his operations to the attack of the enemy by land, to employ his fleet only in the supply of the army, and to avoid all engagement with the Grecian galleys, which now contained the chief force of the enemy. But Xerxes and his officers disdained to follow an advice which they judged the result of female timidity; and the compressed position of the Grecian fleet seemed to offer a favourable opportunity for a decisive blow to their armament. The fleet of the Greeks consisted of three hundred and eighty ships, that of the Persians amounted to twelve hundred sail. The latter, with disorderly impetuosity, hastened to the attack; the former waited their assault in perfect order, and with calm and deliberate resolution. A wind sprang up which blew contrary to the fleet of the Persians; and as it thus became necessary to ply their oars with the greater part of their men, their active force was diminished, their motions impeded, and a confusion ensued which gave their enemy a manifest advantage. It was then that the Greeks became the assailants: they raised the *pæan*, or song of victory, and, aided by the wind, dashed forward upon the Persian squadron; the brazen beaks of the triremes overwhelming and sinking every ship which they touched. The Persians

suffered a complete and dreadful defeat. Artemisia, with her galleys, kept the sea, and fought to the last with manly courage; while Xerxes, who had beheld the engagement from an eminence on the shore, no sooner saw its issue, than he precipitately fled, upon the circulation of a false report that the Greeks designed to break down his bridge of boats upon the Hellespont. The Greeks, landing from their ships, attacked the rear of the Persian army, and made a dreadful carnage, so that the coast was thickly strewn with the dead bodies.*

By the orders of their sovereign, the shattered remains of the Persian fleet sailed directly for the Hellespont, while the army, by rapid marches, took the same route by Bœotia and Thessaly; marking their course by universal desolation: for this immense host, after consuming the natural produce of the country, were reduced, as Herodotus informs us, to eat the grass of the fields, and to strip the trees of their bark and leaves. The same writer mentions, that Xerxes himself never took off his clothes to go to rest, till he reached Abdera, in Thrace. Having provided, however, for his personal safety, he saved, as he imagined, his honour, in this inglorious enterprise, by carrying to Persia a few statues and rich plunder from Athens, and leaving three hundred thousand men under Mardonius to accomplish the conquest of Greece in the next campaign.

The victory of Salamis, the first great naval engagement of the Greeks, convinced them of the importance of a fleet for the national defence; and from that

* Herod. l. viii. c. 84, et. seq. Plutarch, Aristid. Diod. Sic. l. xi. c. 19. It is singular that the most minute and accurate account of this celebrated sea-fight is to be found in the tragedy of the *Persæ*, by Æschylus; a composition equally valuable as a noble effort of poetic genius, and as an historical record. As Æschylus was himself present in this engagement, and thousands of his readers were eyewitnesses of the facts, his accuracy is beyond all impeachment.

time their marine, particularly that of Athens, became an object of serious attention.

Mardonius, notwithstanding his immense force, seemed to have greater hopes from the power of Persian gold than Persian valour. He attempted to corrupt the Athenians by offering them the command of all Greece, if they would desert the confederacy of the united states. Aristides was then archon: he answered, that while the sun held its course in the firmament, the Persians had nothing to expect from the Athenians but mortal and eternal enmity. So much did he here speak the sense of his countrymen, that a single citizen having moved in the public assembly that the Persian deputies should be allowed to explain their proposals, was instantly stoned to death.

Mardonius, now determined to wreak his vengeance on Athens, prepared to assault the city with the whole of his force. The women, the aged, and the infants retired, a second time, to the neighbouring islands; and the Persians, without resistance, burnt and levelled the city with the ground. But the Athenians soon had an ample revenge.

The Spartans sent to their aid, and for the national defence, five thousand citizens, each attended by seven Helots; in all, forty thousand men. The Tegeans, and others of the confederate states, contributed according to their powers; and the united army amounted, according to the best accounts, to sixty-five thousand, when they met the Persians under Mardonius in the field of Platæa. This day's conflict was a counterpart to the naval victory of Salamis. The Persians were totally defeated: Mardonius was killed in the fight. The slaughter was incredible, as out of an army of three hundred thousand men, only forty thousand are said to have saved themselves by flight. The Persian camp, exhibiting all the wealth and apparatus of luxury, was a rich and welcome plunder to the conquerors. To complete the triumph of the Greeks, their

fleet, upon the same day, gained a victory over that of the Persians at Mycale.

From that day, the ambitious schemes of Xerxes were at an end. He had hitherto remained at Sardis, in Lydia, to be nearer the scene of his operations in Greece. On receiving intelligence that all was lost, he wreaked his revenge on all the temples of the Grecian divinities which adorned the cities of Asia; and returning to his capital of Susa, sought to drown in effeminate pleasures the remembrance of his shame; but his inglorious life was destined soon after to be ended by assassination.

At no time was the national character of the Greeks higher than at the period of which we now treat. A common interest had annihilated, for the time, the jealousies of the rival states, and given them union as a nation. At the Olympic games, all the people of Greece rose up to salute Themistocles. The only contention between the greater republics, was a noble emulation of surpassing each other in patriotic exertions for the general defence of their country against the common foe. But this feeling seemed, in reality, to be an unnatural restraint against the predominant and customary spirit of these republics; for no sooner was the national danger, the sole motive of their union, at an end, than the former jealousies and divisions recommenced.

After the expulsion of the Persians, the Athenians now prepared with alacrity to rebuild their ruined city, and to strengthen it by additional fortifications. This design the Spartans could not regard with a tranquil mind; and they had even the folly to send a formal embassy to remonstrate against the measure; urging the weak pretence, that the national interest required that there should be no fortified city out of Peloponnesus, lest the enemy, in the event of another invasion, should make it a place of strength. The real motive of this extraordinary remonstrance was abundantly apparent. They regarded the plan of

rebuilding and enlarging Athens as an alarming symptom of their rival's ambition to establish a predominant power. They were aware that Athens, by means of her fleet, could annoy at pleasure, and thus keep in subjection, a great proportion of the inferior states. Their republic, so formidable on land, could never, with her iron money, have equipped a fleet to vie with that of Athens, far less to resist a foreign invasion such as they had lately experienced. Conscious of the superiority already obtained by Athens, Sparta beheld with uneasiness every symptom of her aggrandizement; she had no other means of retaining her own consequence among the states of Greece, than the diminishing that of her rival.

It was not likely that the remonstrance from Sparta should deter the Athenians from the wise and patriotic purpose of rebuilding and strengthening their native city. They sent Themistocles to Sparta to explain the reasons which influenced them in that design, and proceeded, in the meantime, to carry it vigorously into execution: men, women, slaves, and even children, joined their efforts; and in a very short space of time, Athens rose from her ruins with a great accession of strength and splendour. The harbour of the Piræus, under the direction of Themistocles, then chief archon, was enlarged and fortified, so as to form the completest naval arsenal that yet belonged to any of the nations of antiquity.

The Persians still continued to maintain a formidable armament upon the sea, and the operations of the Greeks were now exerted to clear the Ægean and Mediterranean of their hostile squadrons. The united fleet of Greece was commanded by Aristides and Pausanias; the latter, a man of high birth and authority, uncle to one of the Spartan kings, and regent during his nephew's minority, but himself infamous for betraying his country. He had privately despatched letters to Xerxes, offering to facilitate to him the conquest of Greece; and demanding his daughter in mar-

riage, as a reward of this signal service. Fortunately his letters were intercepted. The traitor fled for protection to the temple of Minerva, a sanctuary from which it was judged impossible to force him. His mother showed an example of virtue truly Lacedæmonian. She walked to the gate of the temple, and laying down a stone before the threshold, silently retired; the signal was understood and venerated; the Ephori gave immediate orders for building a wall around the temple, and within its precincts the traitor was starved to death.

Pausanias was succeeded in the command of the fleet by Cimon, the son of Miltiades, and pupil of Aristides. When the chief command of the war was given to Athens, a new system was established with regard to the contributions of the confederate states, trusting no longer to contingent and occasional supplies or free gifts. The subsidies to be levied from each were to be exacted in proportion to its means, and the revenue of its territory; and a common treasury was appointed to be kept in the Isle of Delos. The high character of Aristides was exemplified in the important and honourable trust with which he was invested by the common consent of the nation. It appears that not only the custody of the national supplies, but the power of fixing their proportions, was conferred on this illustrious man; nor was there ever a complaint or murmur heard against the equity with which this high but invidious function was administered. The best testimony of his virtue was the strict frugality of his life, and the honourable poverty in which he died. The public, which defrayed his funeral charges and provided for the support of his children, thus decorated his name with the noblest memorial of uncorrupted integrity.

Themistocles was then at Argos. His credit at Athens had become formidable; an ostracism had been demanded, and he was banished by the influence of a faction of his enemies. He had fallen under the

suspicion of participating in the treason of Pausanias; and circumstances, though not conclusive, afford some presumptions of his guilt. It is said that the papers of Pausanias, containing a detail of the proposed scheme for betraying Greece to Persia, were found in his possession. Certain it is that measures were taking for a public impeachment before the council of the Amphictyons, when Themistocles, unwilling to risk the consequences of a trial while a strong party of the public were his enemies, hastily withdrew from Greece. He fled first for protection to Admetus, king of the Messenians; but the Greeks threatening a war against his protector, he thought it prudent to seek a more secure asylum, and betook himself to the court of Persia, where he was received with extraordinary marks of distinction and regard. It is said that the Persian monarch vented this keen sarcasm against the Athenians, that he regarded them as his best friends, in sending him the ablest man of their country; and that he sincerely wished they would persevere in the same policy of banishing from their territories all the good and wise. Themistocles was loaded with honours, but did not long survive to enjoy them. Remorse, it is affirmed, had taken possession of his mind, which all the magnificence and luxury of the East could not dispel or overpower; and he is said to have swallowed poison. The Greek historians, philosophers, and poets, all join in bearing honourable testimony to the splendid talents and the eminent services of Themistocles. Ambition, it is true, was his ruling passion; but the ambition of a truly noble mind seeks the glory and the greatness of its country, as essential to the fulfilment of its own desires; and if in reality the designs of Themistocles were criminal, which has never been fully proved, it is probable that the mean jealousies of his political enemies, and the ingratitude of his parent state, drove him reluctantly to measures at which his better nature revolted. His last request

was that his bones should be carried to Greece, and buried in his native soil.

Xerxes, whom we have remarked to have died by assassination, was succeeded by his third son, Artaxerxes, surnamed *Longimanus;* who, in the absence of his eldest brother, having put to death the other, usurped the Persian throne. The war was still carried on with Greece. Cimon, the son of Miltiades, whose valour and abilities compensated to Athens and to Greece the loss of Themistocles, after expelling the Persians from Thrace and from many of their possessions in the lesser Asia, attacked and totally destroyed their fleet near the mouth of the river Eurymedon; and landing his troops, gained a signal victory over their army on the same day.

The consequences of this victory were certainly important, if they produced a complete cessation of hostilities on the part of Persia against Greece, for a considerable length of time. It has, indeed, been asserted by some of the latest of the ancient writers, that a treaty of peace was now concluded, upon these honourable terms for Greece, that all the Greek cities of Asia should regain their independence, and that no Persian ship should dare to come in sight of the Grecian coasts; but this important assertion rests upon no sufficient authority; and that the war was soon after renewed with great animosity, is a fact undisputed.

A dreadful earthquake happening at Lacedæmon, which demolished almost every dwelling in the city, and destroyed about twenty thousand of the citizens, the Helots, taking advantage of the disorder from that calamity, rebelled, and joined themselves to the Messenians, with whom the state was then at war. Sparta at this crisis solicited aid from Athens; and to the shame of that commonwealth, it was debated in the public assembly whether the request should be complied with. Ephialtes, the orator, urging that the two states were natural enemies, and that the prosperity of the one depended on the abasement of the

other, gave his advice to abandon Sparta to her calamities. Cimon nobly and powerfully combated this unworthy sentiment, and his counsel prevailed. He was intrusted with the charge of the expedition to assist the Lacedæmonians; and he was successful in putting an end to the rebellion.

Cimon owed his consideration with his countrymen not only to the splendour of his military talents evinced by his great and glorious successes, but to the remembrance of his father's virtues and services, and above all, to a generosity of character which delighted equally in acts of private bounty and public munificence. Any of these distinguished merits were sufficient at Athens to sow the seeds of distrust and jealousy; but where all concurred, they furnished a certain and infallible preparative of the humiliation of their possessor. He had a rival too in the public favour, who sought his downfall as the means of his own elevation. This was Pericles, a young man of a noble family, of splendid powers, and great versatility of character; who knew how to veil his designs of ambition with the most consummate artifice. While he affected the utmost moderation, declining all public employments or offices, his conduct seemed to be actuated by no other motive than an amiable diffidence of his own powers, which, however, he took care to display whenever occasion offered, in animated and eloquent speeches which breathed the most ardent and virtuous patriotism. His mind was highly cultivated by the study of literature and the sciences; and the affability of his manners fascinated all with whom he conversed. It was not difficult for a man of this character to gain high popularity at Athens; and joining himself to the party which opposed the measures of Cimon, and seizing a favourable opportunity when the popular mind was wound up to their purposes, that virtuous patriot fell a sacrifice, and was banished by the sentence of the ostracism.

The good understanding between Sparta and Athens

could not be of long continuance. Their mutual jealousies broke out afresh, and soon terminated in an open war between the two republics; and most of the minor states of Greece took a part in the quarrel. Had these aimed at absolute freedom, it had perhaps been their best policy to have stood aloof, and suffered those domineering states to harass and weaken each other. But their own smallness and insignificance were a bar to any plan of republican independence. The danger from the Persians, the common enemy, was felt by all; and the smaller states had no chance to escape ruin, but through their allegiance to the greater.

In the course of this war between Athens and Sparta, Cimon, though in exile, eager to serve his country, came to the Athenian army with a hundred of his friends who had voluntarily gone with him to banishment. But the Athenians rejected his proffered service, and forced him to retire. His generous friends, forming themselves into a separate band, desperately precipitated themselves upon the army of the Lacedæmonians, and were all cut off. This incident had a powerful effect in dispelling the popular prejudices against this illustrious character. The people of Athens were now convinced that they had been unjust and cruel to one of their best patriots. Pericles was aware of this change of sentiment, and perceiving that his own popularity might suffer by a fruitless opposition, took the merit to himself of being the first proposer of a public decree for Cimon's recall from banishment. Pericles knew likewise that his rival's talents and his own sought a different field of exertion. While Cimon's ability as a general and naval commander would give him sufficient employment at a distance, he himself could rule the republic at home with uncontrolled authority.

Cimon accordingly returned to his country, after an exile of five years; before the end of which period Athens and Sparta had renewed their alliance; and

he sailed at the head of an armament of two hundred ships-of-war against the Persians, then in the vicinity of Cyprus, with a fleet of three hundred sail. The squadron of the Greeks attacked and totally destroyed them. Cimon afterward landed in Cilicia, and completed his triumph by a signal victory over Megabyzes, the Persian general, at the head of a great army. Cimon now undertook and completed the reduction of Cyprus; but while besieging its capital, and in the very moment of victory, this heroic man, wasted by disease and fatigue, died, to the general loss of Athens and of Greece. The army, at his special request when expiring, concealed his death, and proceeded with vigour in their operations till the object of the enterprise was gloriously accomplished, and Cyprus added to the dominion of Athens.

The naval and military power of Persia was completely broken by these repeated defeats; and all further hostile operations against their formidable enemy were abandoned for a considerable length of time. The military glory of the Greeks seems at this period to have been at its highest elevation. They had maintained a long and successful war, and at length established an undisputed superiority over the greatest and most flourishing of the contemporary empires of antiquity. The causes of this superiority are sufficiently apparent. Greece undoubtedly owed many of her triumphs to those illustrious men who had command of her fleets and armies; to Miltiades, to Aristides, to Themistocles, and to Cimon. But the noblest exertions of individuals would have availed little, without that spirit of union which bound together her separate states in defence of their common liberties. Greece was only formidable while united. The Persian empire, infinitely superior in power, and inexhaustible in resources, derived from the force of a despot an involuntary and reluctant species of association, very different from a union arising from the spirit of patriotism. The armies of the Persians,

immense in their numbers, were like the heavy and inanimate limbs of a vast and ill-organized body. They yielded a sluggish obedience to the will of the head, but were totally incapable of any spirited and vigorous exertion.

But a season of rest from the annoyance of a foreign foe was ever fatal to the prosperity and to the real glory of the Greeks. Their bond of union was no longer in force. The petty jealousies and quarrels of the different states broke out afresh, with an acrimony increased from their temporary suspension.

Athens, which during the war had firmly attached to her alliance a great many of the smaller states, who, in return for protection, cheerfully contributed their supplies for carrying it on, was equally desirous of maintaining the same ascendant in a season of peace, and thus gradually sought to extinguish the original independence of the smaller states, and perpetuate their vassalage. But these were jealous of their freedom, and utterly scorned to become the slaves or tributaries of that ambitious republic. Unable, however, to withstand her power, they had no other means of withdrawing themselves from her dominion, than by courting an alliance with her rival Lacedæmon: for to show that they could at pleasure join themselves to either of these rival states, was, as they flattered themselves, a demonstration that they were not dependent on either. The smaller republics were therefore continually fluctuating between the scales of Athens and Lacedæmon; a circumstance which fomented the rivalship of the latter states, and embittered their animosities; while it increased the national dissensions, and ultimately induced that general weakness which paved the way for the reduction and slavery of Greece.

From this period, too, the martial and the patriotic spirit began alike to decline in the Athenian republic. An acquaintance with Asia, and the importation of a part of her wealth, had introduced an imitation of

her manners, and a taste for her luxuries. But the Athenian luxury was widely different from that of the Persians. With the latter it was only unmeaning splendour and gross sensuality; with the former it took its direction from taste and genius: and while it insensibly corrupted the severer virtues, it is not to be denied that it led to the most elegant and refined enjoyments of life. The age of Pericles was the era of a change in the national spirit of the Athenians: a taste for the *fine arts*, which had hitherto lain dormant from the circumstance of the national danger engrossing all the feelings and passions of men, began, now that this danger had ceased, to break forth with surprising lustre. The sciences, which are strictly allied to the arts, and which always find their chief encouragement from ease and luxury, rose at the same time to a great pitch of eminence.

The age of Pericles is not the era of the highest national glory of the Greeks, if we understand that term in its best and proudest signification; but it is at least the era of their highest internal splendour. Under this striking change, which is evidently preparatory to their downfall, we shall proceed to consider them.

CHAPTER II.

Administration of Pericles—Peloponnesian War—Siege of Platæa—Alcibiades—Lysander—The Thirty Tyrants—Thrasybulus—Death of Socrates—Retreat of the Ten Thousand—War with Persia terminated by the peace of Antalcidas.

The death of Cimon left Pericles for some time an unrivalled ascendency in the republic of Athens; but as the more his power increased he used the less art to disguise his ambitious spirit, a faction was gradually formed to oppose him, at the head of which was Thucydides, the brother-in-law of Cimon, a man no less eminent for his wisdom and abilities than estimable

for his integrity. He had powerful talents as an orator, which he nobly exerted in the cause of virtue and the true interest of his country; but he was deficient in those arts of address in which his rival Pericles so eminently excelled. While Pericles amused the people with shows, or gratified them with festivals, and while he dissipated the public treasure in adorning the city with magnificent buildings, and the finest productions of the arts, it was in vain that Thucydides, ardent in the cause of virtue presented to their minds the picture of ancient frugality and simplicity, or urged the weakening of the power and resources of the state by this prodigal expenditure of her treasure. Pericles flattered the vanity of his countrymen by representing their power as insuperable, and their resources as inexhaustible. It is probable that he was himself blinded by his ambition and vanity. He published an edict, requiring all the states of Greece to send, against a certain day, their deputies to Athens, to deliberate on the common interest of the nation. The Athenians looked on themselves as the masters of all Greece; but they had the mortification to find that no attention was paid to their presumptuous mandate. Pericles, to palliate this wound to their vanity, from which his own credit was in some danger of suffering, ordered the whole fleet of the republic to be immediately equipped, and hastened to make an ostentatious parade through the neighbouring seas, by way of evincing the power and naval superiority of the Athenians. This, however, was a wise policy, and shows that Pericles knew human nature, as well as the peculiar character of the people whom he ruled. It was necessary to keep the Athenians constantly engaged, either with their amusements or some active enterprise; and in dexterously furnishing this alternate occupation lay the art of his government of a people which surpassed any other in fickleness of character.

Fostered in their favourite passions, the Athenians

grew every day more vain and presumptuous. They planned the most absurd schemes of conquest; no less than the reduction of Egypt, of Sicily, of that part of Italy called *Magna Græcia*—and the subjection of all their own colonies to an absolute dependance on the mother-state. Pericles now perceived that he had gone too far, and that, in flattering their vanity, he had given rise to schemes which must terminate in national disgrace, and in his own ruin. It was fortunate, both for him and for his country, that a seasonable rupture with Sparta gave a check to these romantic projects; and the sagacious demagogue from that time, discovered that to cherish the luxurious spirit of his countrymen was a safer means of maintaining his power, than to rouse their vanity and ambition. The finances, however, of the republic were exhausted, and the taxes of course increased. The party of Thucydides complained of this in loud terms, and with great justice. But Pericles had the address to ward off this blow, by proudly offering to defray from his own fortune the expense of those magnificent structures which he had reared for the public. This was touching the right chord; for neither the generosity nor the vanity of the Athenians would allow this offer to be accepted; and the result was a great increase of popularity to Pericles, and the complete humiliation of the party of his enemies. He now signalized his triumph by procuring the banishment of Thucydides; and on the pretence of establishing a few new colonies, he dexterously got rid of the most turbulent of the citizens who traversed and opposed his government.

The allies of the commonwealth, however, loudly complained that the public treasure to which they had largely contributed, and which were intended for their common defence and security against the barbarous nations, were entirely dissipated in gratifying the Athenian populace with feasts and shows, or in decorating their city with ornamental buildings. Pericles

haughtily answered, that the republic was not accountable to them for the employment of their money, which was nothing more than the price they paid for the protection which they received. The allies might have replied with justice, that in contributing supplies, they did not discharge a debt or make a purchase, but conferred a deposite to be faithfully employed for their advantage, and of the expenditure of which they were entitled to demand a strict account: but they durst not call Athens to account; and Pericles and Athens were of one opinion.

But an event now took place which silenced all inquiries of this nature, and bound the subordinate and confederate states in humble submission to the principal—this was the war of Peloponnesus.

The state of Corinth had been included in the last treaty between Athens and Lacedæmon. The Corinthians had for some time been at war with the people of Corcyra, when both these states solicited the aid of the Athenians. This republic, after some deliberation was persuaded by Pericles to take part with Corcyra; a measure which the Corinthians with great justice complained of, not only as an infraction of the treaty with Sparta, but on the ground that Corcyra was their own colony, and it was a settled point in the general politics of Greece, that a foreign power should never interfere in the disputes between a parent state and its colony. A less important cause was sufficient to exasperate the Lacedæmonians against their ancient rival, and war was solemnly proclaimed between the two republics.

The detail of this war, which has been admirably written by Thucydides, one of the best historians as well as one of the greatest generals of antiquity, though it concerned only the states of Greece, becomes, by the pen of that illustrious writer, one of the most interesting subjects which history has recorded. Our plan excluding all minute details, as violating the due proportions in the comprehensive picture of an-

cient history, necessarily confines us to a delineation of outlines.

The greater part of the continental states of Greece declared for Sparta. The Isles, dreading the naval power of Athens, took part with that republic. Thus the principal strength of Sparta was on land, and that of Athens at sea; whence it may be judged, that the opposing states might long annoy each other, before any approach to a decisive engagement.

The army of the Lacedæmonians, which amounted to above sixty thousand men, was more than double that of the Athenians and their allies. But this inequality was balanced by the great superiority of the marine of Athens. Their plan of military operation was, therefore, quite different. The Athenian fleet ravaged the coasts of Peloponnesus; while the army of the Lacedæmonians desolated the territory of Attica and its allied states, and proceeded with little resistance almost to the gates of Athens. The Athenians feeling the disgrace of being thus braved upon their own territory, insisted, with great impatience, that Pericles should allow them to face the enemy in the field; but he followed a wiser plan of operation. He bent his whole endeavour to fortify the city, while he kept the Lacedæmonians constantly at bay by skirmishing parties of horse; and, in the meantime, the Athenian fleet of one hundred sail was desolating the enemies' coasts, and plundering and ravaging the Spartan territory. The consequence was, the Spartans abandoning all hope, which they had at first conceived, of taking Athens by siege, ended the campaign by retreating into Peloponnesus. The Athenians, in honour of their countrymen who had fallen in battle, celebrated magnificent funeral games, and Pericles pronounced an animated eulogium to their memory, which is given at large by Thucydides.

In the next campaign, the Lacedæmonians renewed the invasion of Attica; and the invaded had to cope at once with all the horrors of war and pestilence;

for Athens was at this time visited by one of the most dreadful plagues recorded in history. The particulars of this calamity are painted in strong and terrible colours by Thucydides, who speaks from his own experience, as he was among those who were affected, and survived the contagion. One extraordinary effect he mentions, which we know, likewise, to have happened in other times and places from the same cause. The general despair produced the grossest profligacy and licentiousness of manners. Pericles was blamed as the occasion not only of the war, but of the pestilence; for the great numbers cooped up in the city were supposed to have corrupted the air. The Athenians, losing all resolution to struggle with their misfortunes, sent ambassadors to Sparta to sue for peace; but this humiliating measure served only to increase the arrogance of their enemies, who refused all accommodation, unless upon terms utterly disgraceful to the suppliant state. Although Pericles had strongly dissuaded his countrymen from what he thought a mean and pusillanimous measure, they scrupled not to make him the victim of its failure, and, with equal injustice and ingratitude, they deprived him of all command, and inflicted on him a heavy fine. But they found no change for the better from his removal. Those factions which he had a matchless skill in managing and controlling, began to excite fresh disorders; and the very men who had solicited and procured his disgrace, were now the most eager to restore him to his former power. Such was the fickleness of the Athenian character.

This extraordinary man did not long survive the recovery of his honours and ascendancy. On his deathbed he is said to have drawn comfort from this striking reflection, that he had never made one of his countrymen wear mourning; a glorious object of exultation for the man who had run a career of the most exalted ambition, who had sustained the character of the chief of his country, and in that capacity had at

his command the lives and fortunes of all his fellow-citizens. The eulogists of republican moderation and frugality have reproached Pericles with his ambition, his vanity, and his taste for the elegant arts subservient to luxury and corruption of manners; and these features of his mind, without doubt, had a sensible influence on the character of his country; but his integrity, his generosity of heart, the wisdom of his counsels, and the pure spirit of patriotism which dictated all his public measures, have deservedly ranked him among the greatest men of antiquity.

The celebrated Aspasia, first the mistress and afterward the wife of Pericles, had from her extraordinary talents a great ascendant over his mind, and was supposed frequently to have dictated his counsels in the most important concerns of the state. She was believed to have formed a society of courtesans whose influence over their gallants, young men of consideration in the republic, she thus rendered subservient to the political views of Pericles. The adversaries of his measures employed the comic poets Eupolis, Cratinus, and others, to expose these political intrigues to public ridicule on the stage; but Pericles maintained his ascendant, and Aspasia her influence; for such were the powers of her mind, and the fascinating charms of her conversation, that even before her marriage with Pericles, and while exercising the trade of a courtesan, her house was the frequent resort of the gravest and most respectable of the Athenian citizens; among the rest of the virtuous Socrates.

The age of Pericles is the era of the greatness, the splendour, and the luxury of Athens, and consequently the period from which we may date her decline. The power of Athens was not built on any solid basis. She was rich only from the contributions of her numerous allies; and when these withdrew their subsidies and shook off their dependance, which they were ever ready to do when they were not in danger, her power declined of course: for the territory of the republic

was small and unproductive, and her internal resources extremely limited. Had Sparta adhered to the spirit of her constitution, she was much more independent than Athens. Her situation naturally gave her the command of Peloponnesus. She could employ the subsidies of her allies to no other purposes than those for which they were destined; and therefore required no more than what the expenses of war necessarily demanded. Her confederate states, therefore, paid an easy price for protection, and consequently found it always their best interest to adhere to their allegiance. With these advantages, the balance was much in favour of Sparta, in her contest with Athens. But one false step threw the weight into the opposite scale.

The Spartans, eager to cope with the Athenians at sea as well as on land, solicited the aid of Persia to furnish them with a fleet. This measure, which opened Greece a second time to the barbarians, annihilated the patriotic reputation of Lacedæmon, and detached many of the states from her allegiance, through the just dread of subjection to a foreign power.

It is sufficient to give a general idea of the conduct of the Peloponnesian war; its detail must be sought in Thucydides and Xenophon. Thucydides lived only to complete the history of the first twenty-one years of the Peloponnesian war; the transactions of the remaining six years were detailed by Xenophon, in his Grecian History. Neither party seem to have pursued any fixed or uniform plan of operations. The theatre of war was continually shifting from one quarter of Greece to another, as occasional successes seemed to direct; but ignorant how to push advantages, and equally dispirited with trifling losses, the rival states were always alternately disposed to peace, or a renewal of hostilities.

One of the most remarkable transactions of this war was the gallant defence made by the little town

of Platæa, which sustained a siege and blockade for near two years against the power of the combined states of Peloponnesus. As this is the first regular siege of which history gives us any complete detail, a short narrative of its particulars as described by Thucydides will be useful, as illustrating the state of the military art at that period, in so far as regards the attack and defence of fortified places.

Platæa, in the Bœotian district of Greece and not far distant from Thebes, being frequently harassed by that republic, had allied herself to Athens as her surest defence against servitude and oppression. This alliance brought on her the hostility of the Peloponnesian confederacy: but remembering the signal services of this small state at the time of the Persian invasion, the Spartans proposed to compromise matters with Platæa, provided she renounced her treaty of union with Athens, and put herself under the protection of Lacedæmon. The Athenians, in the meantime, sent the Platæans an assurance of all their support, and this determined Platæa to keep firm to her ancient friends. The Spartans, thinking they had now fulfilled every obligation of honour, laid vigorous siege to the town, which contained only a miserable garrison of four hundred citizens, eighty Athenians, and one hundred and ten women, besides children. The city was surrounded with a wall and ditch, around which the besiegers first planted a strong circle of wooden palisades. Then filling up a part of the ditch to serve as a bridge, they proceeded to raise a mound of earth against the walls which they strengthened on the outside with piles closely wattled with branches, to give stability to the mound which was to serve as a stage for the engines of attack. Meantime, the besieged, foreseeing that the enemy would soon be in possession of that part of the wall, while they took every means to annoy the assailants and impede their work by repeatedly undermining the mound, built a new wall in the inside, in the form of a cres-

cent, so that, should the outer wall be gained, the enemy might still find an unforeseen impediment to their approach. The besiegers made small progress, and were daily losing great numbers of men; they therefore tried a new plan, which was, by heaping great quantities of wood covered with pitch and sulphur around the walls, to set fire to the city in different quarters at once. The experiment promised success, for there was an immense conflagration; but fortunately for the besieged, a torrent of rain extinguished the fire. On the failure of this attempt, the besiegers determined to turn the siege into a blockade; and they now built two strong walls of brick around the town, which they strengthened on either side with a ditch and towers at small intervals; and as the winter was at hand, the Bœotians were left to guard the walls and prevent all succours from without, while the Spartans and the rest of the allies returned to Peloponnesus. The situation of the Platæans was now extremely hopeless; their stores were exhausted, and no resource remained but to force a passage through the enemy's works. This one half of the garrison attempted and executed in a very daring manner. They took advantage of a dark and stormy night, and mounting the enemy's inner wall by ladders, they surprised and cut to pieces the guards in the towers, and were descending the outer wall, when the alarm was given, and the Bœotians were in a moment all in arms; three hundred of these with lighted torches rushing to the place, served only to give more advantage to the Platæans, by showing them where to direct their darts and stones while they passed by them in the dark. In a word, they made good their escape to Athens; while the remaining part of the garrison next day surrendered at discretion, and were barbarously massacred by the exasperated Lacedæmonians. The whole operations of this siege indicate the very imperfect state to which the art of

war had attained at that time, in the most warlike of the nations of antiquity.

A truce was now concluded between the belligerant powers for fifty years; but this was observed only for a few months. Alcibiades, who, after the death of Pericles, had obtained a high ascendant with the Athenian people, which he owed not less to his noble birth and great riches than to his insinuating manners and powers of eloquence, at this time directed all the counsels of the republic. His ambition and his vanity were equal to those of his predecessor, but his measures were not always the result of equal prudence. It seemed to be ambition, and the desire of opposing his rival Nicias, that were the sole motives of his conduct in prompting a quarrel between the people of Argos and Lacedæmon, which engaged the Athenians in support of the Argives to renew the Peloponnesian war. The Argives, however, had more prudence than their new allies, and made a peace for themselves. Disappointed in this project, Alcibiades now turned his views to the conquest of Sicily—a more splendid object of ambition; but equally unsuccessful, and much more disastrous in its consequences. The plan of conquering Sicily had been among those wild projects cherished by the Athenians, but from which they had been dissuaded by the prudence of Pericles: it was now resumed on the frivolous ground that the Egestans and Leontines, two Sicilian states, had requested the Athenians to protect them against the oppression of Syracuse. Nicias attempted to convince his countrymen of the folly of embroiling themselves in this quarrel, which was a sufficient motive with Alcibiades to encourage it. The expedition was therefore undertaken, and committed to four generals, Nicias, Lamachus, Demosthenes, and Alcibiades; but the latter had scarcely landed in Sicily, when he was called back to Athens to defend himself against a charge of treason and impiety. As everything there was carried by a faction, Alcibiades

was condemned, and escaped a capital punishment only by taking refuge at Sparta, and offering his warmest services to the enemies of his country. Meantime, the dissensions of the Athenian generals, the time wasted in besieging some small seaports, and the arrival of succours from Lacedæmon, which strengthened and inspirited the Syracusans, combined to the total failure of the enterprise. After a fruitless attempt upon Syracuse, in the course of which Lamachus was killed, and after various engagements both by sea and by land, in which the invading fleet and army were always obliged to act upon the defensive, the Athenians were totally defeated. They now attempted a retreat, but being closely pursued they were forced at length to surrender prisoners-of-war, leaving their fleet in the hands of the enemy, and stipulating only that their lives should be spared. This condition the Syracusans fulfilled as to the army, but, with a refinement of barbarism, they scourged to death the two generals Nicias and Demosthenes. Such was the miserable issue of this ill-concerted expedition.

The consequences of these disasters were, on the whole, not without some benefit to the Athenians. Their foolish pride was humbled, their inconsiderate ambition checked, and some wise and vigorous reforms were made in the constitution of the republic. Among these was the institution of a new council of elders, whose function was to digest and prepare the resolutions touching all public measures, before they were proposed in the public assembly. This, as a judicious writer has remarked, "was providing for the prudence of executive government, but not for vigour, for secrecy, and for despatch:" a deficiency in these capital points is inseparable from a constitution purely democratical.

We have remarked that Alcibiades had taken refuge at Lacedæmon. Here he soon attained both confidence and high employment; but this glimpse of favour which the traitor ill-deserved, was of short duration.

The principal men among the Lacedæmonians could ill brook those marks of favour and preference to a stranger and a refugee. His character was known as that of a thoroughpaced politician; his motives were therefore always suspected; and while ostensibly employed in the service of Sparta with the Greek states of Asia—a service which had no other end than his own private interest—a party at Lacedæmon had procured his condemnation for treason against the state. He got a seasonable intimation of his danger, and betook himself for protection to Tissaphernes, the Persian governor of Sardis.

In the eighth year of the Peloponnesian war, the Persian monarch, Artaxerxes Longimanus, died. He was succeeded by Xerxes II., his only legitimate son, who was soon after assassinated by his natural brother Sogdianus. This prince was dethroned a few months after, by his brother Ochus, who assumed the name of Darius, to which the Greeks added the surname of Nothus, or the Bastard. He was a weak prince, controlled entirely by his queen Parysatis, a woman of great artifice and ambition. His reign was a continued series of rebellion and disturbance.

The versatile character of Alcibiades could accommodate itself to all situations. At Athens he had alternately flattered the nobility and the populace. At Sparta he assumed, with admirable hypocrisy, the simple and austere manners of a Lacedæmonian. At Sardis, the easy companion of the luxury and debauchery of Tissaphernes, he gained over that satrap the most entire ascendancy. This situation he attempted to turn to his advantage, by making his peace with his countrymen of Athens. He offered them the alliance of Tissaphernes, and of consequence the superiority over Sparta, and a termination of the ruinous war of Peloponnesus; but he made the absolute condition of these advantages his own recall, and a change of the Athenian constitution from a popular government to an oligarchy of the principal citizens. The spirit of

Athens was broken; patriotic virtue was at a low ebb; and a continuance of war, and of the triumphs of her rival state, offered a prospect of nothing but ruin. The terms of Alcibiades were complied with. The government of the republic was committed to four hundred of the nobles, who were vested with absolute authority.

No sooner was intelligence of this sudden and extraordinary revolution brought to the Athenian army at Samos, than they followed a conduct equally extraordinary. They deposed from command those generals whom they suspected of favouring the revolution; they sent deputies into Asia, to court aid from the very man who was its author; they solicited him to return to take the chief command, and rescue their country from its new tyrants. Surprised and delighted with this most unexpected issue to his schemes, Alcibiades eagerly embraced the offer. He would not, however, return till he had merited his pardon by some important services. The Lacedæmonian fleet under Mindarus had seized the island of Eubœa, a most essential dependancy upon Athens. Alcibiades defeated Mindarus in two naval engagements, and recovered that important island. The people of Athens, exasperated at their new governors, to whose weakness and contentions they attributed the loss of Eubœa, began to look toward the man who had recovered it as the prop and stay of his country. He had increased his triumphs by the capture of Byzantium, Chalcedon, and Salymbria, which had revolted from the Athenian government; and when he appeared with his ships-of-war in the port of Piræus, all Athens rushed forth to hail his arrival, and to crown him with garlands of victory. The government of the four hundred nobles was now abolished, the ancient constitution renewed, and Alcibiades declared chief general of the republic by sea and land.

For twenty-eight years the Peloponnesian war was carried on with various success. The military talents

of Alcibiades were displayed in several important victories. While successful, he was the idol of his country. A single battle lost in Asia deprived him of all his power, and he became a second time an exile from his country. But it would appear that his absence was always fatal to the Athenians. The fleet of the republic at Ægos-Potamos, through the carelessness of its commanders, was entirely destroyed by Lysander, the admiral of the Lacedæmonians. Of three hundred ships which had sailed from the Piræus, only eight returned to the coast of Attica.

Athens, besieged by sea and land, was now at the last extremity. Her fleet, which was the main defence of the republic, was annihilated. After sustaining a blockade of six months, the Athenians offered to submit, on the condition that their city and the harbour of Piræus should be saved from destruction. The Spartans and allied states took this proposal into consideration. The allies strenuously urged the total destruction of the Athenian empire and name. But the Spartans were more generous. They concluded a peace on the following conditions,—that the fortifications of Piræus should be demolished; that Athens should limit the number of her fleet to twelve ships; that she should give up all the towns taken during the war; and, for the future, undertake no military enterprise but under the command of the Lacedæmonians. Such was the issue of the famous war of Peloponnesus.

It is to the same Lysander who had the merit of teminating this destructive war so gloriously for his country, that all the ancient writers have attributed tho first attack upon the system of Lycurgus, and the beginning of the corruption of the Spartan constitution. Gold was now for the first time introduced into Lacedæmon. Lysander sent home an immense mass of plunder which had been taken in Greece and Asia during the war of Peloponnesus. This was a direct breach of the fundamental laws of the state; but the

period was now come, when such a measure was not only justifiable, but necessary. The truth is, that the institutions of Lycurgus were fitted for a rude period of society, and adapted to the regulation of a small, a warlike, and an independent commonwealth. His system was quite repugnant to the spirit of conquest, and the manners that are inseparable from extensive dominion. When Lacedæmon came to aspire to the sovereignty of Greece, it was impossible for her to retain her ancient manners, or adhere to her ancient laws. To preserve the ascendancy she had acquired in Greece, it was necessary either that she should herself accumulate treasures requisite to pay her dependants in the allied commonwealths, and grant them occasional subsidies, or to be herself dependant for those resources upon the Persian satraps. Lysander saw this necessity, and he took that alternative which appeared to him the least dishonourable. He procured the abrogation of that ancient law which prohibited the importation of gold into the republic. It was not allowed a free circulation, but was deposited in the public treasury, to be employed solely for the uses of the state. It was declared a capital offence if any should be found in the possession of a private citizen. Plutarch censures this as a weak and sophistical distinction. It was indeed easy to see, that whenever it became of necessity for the state to be rich, it would soon become the interest and the passion of individuals to be so. This consequence immediately followed; and though some severe examples were made of offenders against the law, it was found impossible, from this period, to enforce its observance.

The reduction of Athens by the Spartans occasioned an entire change in the constitution of the Athenian republic. Lysander abolished the democracy, and substituted in its place an administration of thirty governors, or, as the Greek historians term them, *Tyrants* (Τυραννοι), whose power seems to have been absolute, unless in so far as each was restrained by the

equally arbitrary will of his colleagues. He likewise placed a Spartan garrison in the citadel, under the command of Callibius. Soon after this event, so disgraceful to his country, the celebrated Alcibiades was put to death in Phrygia, by assassins employed for that purpose by Pharnabazus, the Persian governor, who, it is said, was prompted to that act of treachery by the Lacedæmonians, who dreaded to see this able and ambitious man once more reconciled to his country. He perished in the fortieth year of his age.

The administration of *the thirty tyrants* soon became quite intolerable to the Athenians. A stronger specimen of their government cannot be given than the following. Theramenes, one of the thirty, a man of a more humane disposition than his colleagues, having opposed the severity of some of their measures, Critias, his colleague, who by the controlling influence of the Spartans had acquired the chief ascendency in the council, accused him of disturbing the peace of the state. The consequence was, that after a public trial, in which the philosopher Socrates was among the few who had courage to aid him in his defence, he was condemned to die by poison: and his death was the prelude to a series of proscriptions, confiscations, and murders of the most respectable of the citizens, who were obnoxious to these sanguinary rulers, or who had dared to murmur at their proceedings. It is computed by Xenophon, though doubtless with exaggeration, that a greater number of Athenian citizens lost their lives by the sentence of these tyrants, in the short space of eight months, than had fallen in the whole course of the Peloponnesian war.

The people were awed into silence, and dumb with consternation. The most eminent of the Athenian families left their country in despair; and the bravest of those who cherished a hope of restoring its liberties and putting an end to this usurpation, chose for their leader Thrasybulus, a man of known abilities and undaunted resolution, under whose conduct and auspices

they resolved to make a vigorous effort for the recovery of their freedom. Sparta had strictly prohibited the other states of Greece receiving, protecting, or giving any aid to the Athenian fugitives. Thebes and Megara were the only republics which generously dared to disobey this presumptuous mandate. Lysias, an orator of Syracuse, sent to their aid five hundred soldiers raised at his own expense. This band of patriots had now increased to a considerable number, and, headed by Thrasybulus, they made a sudden assault on the Piræus, and made themselves masters of the port and fortifications, which were the main defence of the city of Athens. The thirty tyrants hastily assembled their troops to attack and dislodge the assailants, and a battle ensued, in which the patriots were victorious. Critias was killed; and as the troops of the tyrants were making a disorderly retreat, Thrasybulus gallantly addressed them as friends and fellow-citizens. "Why do you fly from me," said he, "as from an enemy? Am I not your countryman and your best friend? It is not against you, but against your oppressors, that I am fighting. Let us cordially unite in the noble design of vindicating the liberty of our dear country." This appeal had its proper effect. The army returned to Athens, and in a full assembly of the people the thirty tyrants were deposed and expelled from the city. The government was committed to a council of ten citizens, who still abused their power. The deposed thirty solicited the aid of Sparta, and an army immediately took the field, with the purpose of re-establishing them in their power: but the attempt was unsuccessful: the patriots were again victorious; the oppressors of their country were defeated and slain, and Thrasybulus returning in triumph to Athens, after proclaiming a general amnesty, by which every citizen took a solemn oath to bury all past transactions in oblivion, this brave and virtuous Athenian had the signal honour of restoring to his country its ancient form of government.

One event which happened at this time reflected more disgrace upon the Athenians than all their intestine dissensions or their national humiliation. This was the persecution and death of the illustrious Socrates: he who, in the words of Cicero, "first brought philosophy from heaven to dwell upon earth, who familiarized her to the acquaintance of man, who applied her divine doctrines to the common purposes of life, and the advancement of human happiness, and the true discernment of good and evil." This great man, who was the bright pattern of every virtue which he taught, became an object of hatred and disgust to the corrupted Athenians. He had excited the jealousy of the Sophists, a set of men who pretended to universal science, whose character stood high with the Athenian youth, and who taught their disciples a specious mode of arguing with equal plausibility on all subjects, and on either side of any question. Socrates detested this species of jugglery, which mined the foundation of every moral truth. He saw its pernicious influence, and he was at pains to expose the futility of this trifling logic, and to bring its professors into merited contempt. These, therefore, and a numerous party of their disciples, became, of course, his inveterate enemies. They calumniated Socrates as a corrupter of youth; for of these the most ingenious and virtuous were openly become his scholars and partisans: they accused him as an enemy to religion, because in his sublime reasonings, without regard to the superstitions of the vulgar, he endeavoured to lead the mind to the knowledge of one supreme and beneficent Being, the author of nature, and the supporter of the universe: they represented him, in fine, as a foe to the constitution of his country, because he had never been restrained by an interested or selfish policy from freely blaming that inconstancy and fluctuation of counsels which marked the proceedings of their popular assemblies There was abundant matter of accusation, and a

charge of treason and impiety was laid against him in full form.

The ablest, at that time, of the Greek orators, Lysias, generously offered to undertake the defence of Socrates; but the latter declined to avail himself of that offer. "I will not," said he, "suppose my judges interested in my condemnation; and if I am guilty, I must not endeavour by persuasion to avert the award of justice." His defence he made himself, with the manly fortitude of conscious innocence. Plato, in his *Apologia Socratis*, has given an ample account of it. It consisted of a simple detail of his life and conduct as a public teacher; in reference to which he uttered this striking apostrophe: "I believe, O Athenians, the existence of God more than my accusers. I am so perfectly convinced of that great truth, that to God, and to you, I submit to be judged in that manner you shall think best for me and for yourselves." The populace, whom their demagogues had strongly prejudiced against this great and good man, were effected by his defence, and showed marks of a favourable disposition; when Anytus and several others, men of high consideration in the republic, now openly stood forth and joined the party of his accusers. The weak and inconstant rabble were drawn along by their influence, and a majority of thirty suffrages declared Socrates guilty. The punishment was still undetermined, and he himself had the right of choosing it. "It is my choice," said he, "that since my past life has been employed in the service of the public, that public should for the future be at the charge of my support." This tranquillity of mind, which could sport with the danger of his situation, served only to exasperate his judges. He was sentenced, after an imprisonment of thirty days, to drink the juice of hemlock. That time he spent as became the hero and the philosopher. His friends had prepared the means of his escape, and earnestly endeavoured to persuade him to attempt it; but he convinced them that it is a crime

to violate the law, even where its sentence is unjust. On the day of his death he discoursed with uncommon force of eloquence on the immortality of the soul, on the influence that persuasion ought to have on the conduct of life, and on the comfort it diffused on the last moments of existence. He drank the poisoned cup without the smallest emotion; and in the agony of death, showed to his attending friends an example of tranquillity which their deep-felt grief denied them all power of imitating. The narrative of this concluding scene, as it is given by Plato in his dialogue entitled Phædon, is one of the noblest specimens of simple, eloquent, and pathetic description which is anywhere to be met with; a narrative to the force of which Cicero bears this strong testimony, that he never could read it without tears. Such was the end of this true philosopher, of whom his ungrateful countrymen knew not the value till they had destroyed him. It was time now to awake to shame and remorse, and to express their sorrow for his death by the utmost abhorrence for his persecutors. These met with their deserved punishment; but the reproach was indelibly fixed upon the character of the Athenians, and no contrition could wipe it out.

The military character of the Greeks was not yet extinguished, notwithstanding their national corruption. In the same year with the last-mentioned event, a part of the Grecian troops in Asia signalized themselves by one of the most remarkable exploits recorded in history: this was *the retreat of the ten thousand.*

On the death of Darius Nothus, his eldest son, Artaxerxes Memnon succeeded to the empire, while his brother Cyrus was by their father's will invested with the government of Lydia and several of the adjoining provinces. The ambition of this young man early conceived the criminal project of dethroning his elder brother, and seizing upon the throne of Persia; but though his design was detected, he obtained his pardon from Artaxerxes, upon the entreaties of Pary-

satis, the queen-mother, and with a singular measure of generosity was even continued in the full command of his provinces. This humane indulgence he treacherously abused, by secretly levying a large army in different quarters of the lesser Asia, under the feigned pretence of restraining some of the disorderly satraps, but in reality with the purpose of a sudden attack against his unprepared and unsuspecting brother. In the army of Cyrus were a chosen body of thirteen thousand Greeks from the Peloponnesus, under the command of Clearchus, a Lacedæmonian, an officer of great experience and prowess, to whom alone of all his captains Cyrus confided the nature and object of his enterprise. It was with infinite address upon the part of Clearchus, that the Greeks, together with the rest of the army, were led on from province to province till they came within a few days' march of Babylon, where Cyrus at length imparted to them the purpose of the expedition, and reconciled them to its hazards by a large increase of present pay and an assurance of unbounded rewards in the event of final success. But this they were not destined to experience. In a decisive engagement at Cunaxa, in the plain between the Tigris and Euphrates, the Greeks put to flight that wing of the Persian army which was opposed to them. Cyrus, after the most extraordinary exertions of personal valour, espying Artaxerxes amid the strong body of his guards, singled him out for his attack, and after twice wounding his brother and dismounting him from his horse, fell himself a victim by the hand of Artaxerxes, who pierced him to the heart with his javelin. Thus this ambitious youth, who seems to have been in other respects an accomplished and heroic character, met with his deserved fate. It is surprising that Xenophon, who has admirably written the history of this expedition, should have bestowed the most unbounded encomium on this prince, without the smallest censure of his most culpable enterprise.

The Greek army diminished by its losses and by desertions to ten thousand men, made a most amazing retreat. Harassed by the Persian troops under Tissaphernes, who hung continually upon their rear, Clearchus brought them again to a pitched battle, in which the Greeks defeated the barbarians a second time and put their army to flight. Perceiving, however, that in a country of enemies, where they must fight at every step of their progress, they must perish, even though victorious in every action, Clearchus willingly listened to a proposed accommodation with Tissaphernes, who invited him for that purpose, together with the rest of the Greek commanders, to a friendly conference. With great weakness, Clearchus and four of the principal officers repaired to the enemy's camp, attended by a very slender escort. They had no sooner entered the tent of Tissaphernes than, upon a given signal, they were all massacred. The consternation of the Greeks at this horrible treachery was extreme. They saw that they had nothing to trust either to the faith or mercy of the barbarians, and that their only safety lay at the point of their swords. In a midnight consultation of the troops, Xenophon, then a young man and in no high command, took upon him to counsel and to harangue the despairing army. By his advice they immediately chose new generals in the room of those who had perished, and Xenophon himself, with four others, being invested with this important charge, his admirable conduct, perseverance, and valour brought his countrymen at length safely through all their difficulties. They began by burning all their useless baggage, every man retaining only what was absolutely necessary for the march. They proceeded with indefatigable resolution and almost daily conflicts with the enemy, ignorant of the roads and of the defiles, crossing wide and dangerous rivers, and often breast-deep in the snow, to make their way, through the mountainous country eastward of Mesopotamia, to

Armenia and the farther provinces bordering upon the Euxine. Ascending a steep mountain on the borders of Colchis, the vanguard of the army set up a prodigious shout, which Xenophon, in the rear, supposed to be the signal of a sudden attack from the enemy, and urged on the main body with haste to the summit; when, to their inexpressible joy, they found it was the first sight of the sea which had occasioned this exclamation. With one sudden and sympathetic emotion, the soldiers and commanders rushed into each other's arms and shed a torrent of tears; and then, without any order, each man striving to outdo his fellow, they raised an immense pile of stones upon the spot, which they crowned with broken bucklers and spoils they had taken from the enemy. Arriving soon after at Trapezus, a Greek colony upon the Euxine, they celebrated splendid games with great joy and festivity for the space of several days; and finally embarking at Sinope, after many turns of fortune and various adventures in the course of their progress homeward, this eventful expedition, in which the Grecian army traversed a space of one thousand one hundred and fifty-five leagues, was terminated in the course of fifteen months.

The narrative of this expedition by Xenophon is one of the most valuable compositions that remain to us of antiquity. In the form of a journal, it gives a minute detail of every day's transactions, the counsels, plans, and different opinions of the principal officers, a vivid description of the places, cities, rivers, and mountains upon the line of march; the productions of the different countries; the singular manners of many of the rude nations through which they passed; and finally, the extraordinary incidents which befell this hardy and resolute band of adventurers, through every stage of a campaign of greater duration, difficulty, and danger than was ever performed by any army of ancient or of modern times. In fine, the *Anabasis* of Xenophon, with the veracity of genu-

ine history, has all the charms of an interesting romance.

The cities of Iona had taken part with the younger Cyrus against Artaxerxes. The greater part of the Greeks in the service of Cyrus in that expedition were, as we have seen, Lacedæmonians. Sparta was now engaged to defend her countrymen, and consequently was involved in a war with Persia. There was an inherent weakness in the constitution of the Persian monarchy, arising from the high power and almost supreme authority exercised by the satraps, or governors of the provinces. It is easy to imagine how formidable to the monarch of Persia must have been the confederacy of two or three of these satraps, and of consequence that it was his chief interest to keep them disunited by fomenting mutual jealousies. The state maxim of the Persian kings was, therefore, to divide, in order to command; a rule of policy which is a certain proof of the fundamental weakness of that government where it is necessary to adopt it. In Persia, the satraps might, by this management be kept in a state of unwilling dependance on the crown, but it left the monarchy itself weak and defenceless.

Had the Greeks at this period been sensible of their real interest; had they again united as a nation, making Sparta the head of the confederacy, as in the former war with that power they had done Athens, it would not have been a difficult enterprise to have overthrown this vast empire. But experience does not always enlighten; and with the Greeks it was not easy for a sense of general or national advantage to overcome particular jealousies. The haughty Athenians, in spite of their humiliation, would have ill brooked the degradation of ranging themselves under the banners of Sparta; much less was it to be expected that the Spartans, justly elevated with their success in the Peloponnesian war, would ever again stoop to act a subordinate part to Athens.

Conon, the Athenian, who, in the conclusion of that

war, had lost the decisive battle of *Ægos-Potamos*, had retired to the isle of Cyprus, where he only waited an opportunity of regaining his credit, and recommending himself to his country, by some active service against her rival Sparta. In this view, he threw himself under the protection of Artaxerxes, who gave him the command of a fleet which he had equipped in Phœnicia.

The Lacedæmonians, on receiving this intelligence, resolved to prosecute the war with the utmost vigour; and Agesilaus, one of the Spartan kings, in that view crossed into Asia with an army. He had, in his first campaign, such signal success, that the Persian monarchy seemed to threaten a revolution. The Asiatic provinces began to court the alliance of Lacedæmon; the barbarians flocked to her standards from all quarters. Artaxerxes thought it advisable to attempt a diversion in Greece. He employed Timocrates, a Rhodian, to negotiate with some of the tributary states belonging to Lacedæmon, and to excite them to throw off her yoke, and assert their independence. He found the most of them well-disposed to this attempt, and a proper application of the Persian gold hastened their insurrection. A league was formed against Sparta by the states of Argos, Thebes, and Corinth; and Athens soon after joined the confederacy, which gave a sudden turn to the fortunes of Lacedæmon.

The Spartans raised two considerable armies, and commenced hostilities by entering the territory of Phocis. They were defeated; Lysander, one of their generals, being killed in battle, and Pausanias, the other condemned to death for his misconduct. Much about the same time, the Persian fleet under the command of Conon vanquished that of Sparta, near Cnidos, a city of Caria. This defeat deprived the Lacedæmonians of the command of the sea. Their allies took the opportunity of this turn of affairs to throw off their yoke, and Sparta, almost in a single campaign, saw herself without allies, without power, and without re-

sources. The reverse of fortune experienced by this republic was truly remarkable. Twenty years had not elapsed since she was absolute mistress of Greece, and held the whole of her states either as tributaries, or allies who found it their highest interest to court her favour and protection. So changed was her present situation, that the most inconsiderable of the states of Peloponnesus spurned at her authority, and left her singly to oppose the united power of Persia and the league of Greece.

To escape total destruction, the Lacedæmonians made an overture of peace to the Persians. Antalcidas, commissioned for that purpose, applied to Terebasus, the governor of Lydia. He laid before him three articles as the conditions of amity and alliance. By the first, the Spartans abandoned to Persia all the Asiatic colonies; by the second, it was proposed that all the allied states of Greece should enjoy their liberty, and the choice of their own laws and form of government; and by the last, it was agreed that such of the states as might acquiesce in these conditions should unite in arms, and compel the others to accede to them. Artaxerxes accepted these propositions, but stipulated further, that he should be put in possession of Cyprus and Clazomene, and that the Athenians should get possession of the islands of Scyros, Lemnos, and Imbros. Some of the principal states of Greece, and Thebes in particular, refused at first to consent to this, which they justly regarded as an humiliating treaty; but, too weak to make an effectual opposition, they yielded to the necessity of their situation.

CHAPTER III.

Republic of Thebes—Pelopidas and Epaminondas—Battle of Leuctra—of Mantinea—General peace and its consequences—Philip of Macedon—The sacred war—Demosthenes—Battle of Chæronea—Designs of Philip against Persia—His death.

While the two great republics of Greece, Sparta and Athens, were thus visibly tending to decline, another of the Grecian commonwealths, which had hitherto made no conspicuous figure, now suddenly rose to a degree of splendour which eclipsed all her contemporary states. This was the republic of Thebes, whose sudden elevation from obscurity to the command of Greece is one of the most remarkable occurrences in history.

As Sparta, by the late treaty with Persia, seemed to be regarded as the predominant power in Greece, and to have negotiated (as it may be termed) the fall of the nation, she was naturally induced to endeavour by every means to maintain this character of ascendancy, and for that end had her partisans and political agents in all the principal states. The natural consequence of this policy was to excite and maintain in all of them two separate factions; the one the patriotic supporters of liberty and independence, and the other the mean slaves of Lacedæmonian interest. Such, among the rest, was, at this time the situation of Thebes. The patriotic party in this republic which supported its ancient constitution and independence, was headed by Ismenias; while the opposite faction, which aimed at the establishment of an oligarchy, had for its chief supporter Leontiades, a man firmly devoted to the interest of Sparta. It happened, at this time, that Phæbidas a Lacedæmonian general, was sent with an army to punish the people of Olynthus, a Thracian city, for an alleged infraction of the late treaty of peace, by making conquests over some of the neighbouring states.

The Spartans considered themselves as the guarantees of that treaty which they had so main a hand in negotiating, and which professed to secure the independence of the several republics. We shall see how faithfully they discharged this guarantee. Leontiades, the head of the party of the oligarchy at Thebes, prevailed on Phæbidas to second his attempts against the liberties of his country The Spartan general readily gave his aid, and introducing his army, took possession of the citadel; while the unsuspicious Thebans, trusting to the faith of the treaty, were employed in celebrating the festival of Ceres. Ismenias, the chief of the democratic interest, was seized and put to death; and the principal men of his party escaped with precipitation from the city.

The conduct of the Spartans, in this juncture, shows how unequal is the conflict between virtue and self-interest. They acknowledged it an act of treason in Leontiades to have thus betrayed his country, and they reprobated the conduct of Phæbidas in giving his aid to a measure which was a direct infraction of a national treaty; but being now masters of Thebes, they did not choose to abandon their acquisition. This shameful conduct was justly censured by all Greece. Four hundred of the chief citizens of Thebes had fled for protection to Athens. Among these was Pelopidas, the avenger and deliverer of his country. Maintaining a regular intelligence with such of the citizens as were friends to the cause of justice and patriotism, at the head of whom was the great Epaminondas, a plan was concerted for the recovery of Thebes, which succeeded to the utmost of their wishes. Pelopidas, with eleven of his friends in the disguise of peasants, entered the city in the dusk of the evening, and joined the rest of the conspirators in the house of a principal citizen, of the name of Charon. Philidas, who acted as secretary to the polemarchs or chief magistrates of Thebes, was, secretly, a steady friend to the design; and had purposely invited the chiefs of the oligarchy,

and the principal of the Spartan commanders, to a magnificent supper at his house, where as a part of the entertainment, he promised to regale his guests with the company of some of the handsomest of the Theban ladies. While the guests were warm with wine, a courier arrived from Athens, and brought a letter to Archias, the chief governor, desiring it to be instantly read, as containing important business. "This is no time," said the voluptuary, "to trouble us with business: we shall consider of that to-morrow." This letter contained a full discovery of the plot. Mean time, Pelopidas and his companions, dressed in female attire, entered the hall, and each drawing a dagger from under his robe, massacred the governor and the whole of the Spartan officers, before they had time to stand upon their defence. The principal of their enemies thus despatched, they entered the houses of several others whom they knew to be hostile to their purpose, and put them likewise to death. Such were the transactions of this busy night. But a strong garrison of fifteen hundred Spartans were in possession of the citadel. Fortunately, a body of five thousand foot and two thousand horse, despatched from Athens, arrived early next morning to the aid of Pelopidas. Epaminondas called to arms all the citizens who wished the deliverance of their country, and put himself at their head: the associated troops laid siege to the citadel; and in a very short time, the Spartans, seeing all resistance vain, agreed to open the gates and save the effusion of blood by instantly evacuating Thebes. The capitulation was agreed to; and Pelopidas and Epaminondas were hailed the deliverers of their country.*

* In this account of the revolution of Thebes, I have followed the authority of Plutarch in preference to that of Xenophon, though, in general, I admit that the credit of the latter is higher than that of the former. But Xenophon, with all his talents and virtues, was a man of strong prejudices; of which there cannot be a more striking example than this very

Thebes was now necessarily involved in a war with Sparta; but she had the assistance of Athens. With this respectable aid, she was, perhaps, a match for her powerful antagonist, but she did not long enjoy the advantage of that alliance: Persia, which since the last peace had acquired a title to mediate in the affairs of Greece, brought about an overture of accommodation between the contending states. All articles were agreed upon, when a small punctilio exasperated the Thebans. They could not bear that their name should be classed among the inferior states of Greece; and Sparta was determined it should. Neither party would yield, and Thebes was entirely struck out of the treaty, which was acceded to by all the other republics.

Thus the Thebans stood alone, in opposition to the league of Greece: but Epaminondas and Pelopidas were their generals. The battle of Leuctra showed how much may be achieved by the patriotic exertions and abilities of a few distinguished individuals. The Theban army, amounting only to six thousand men, commanded by Epaminondas, entirely defeated twenty five thousand Lacedæmonians, and left four thousand, with their king, Cleombrotus, dead upon the field. By the law of Sparta, all who fled from the enemy, were doomed to suffer a capital punishment; but Agesilaus prudently suspended the law for a single day: the Spartans, otherwise, must have lost their whole army.

It is remarkable, that when the news of this great defeat reached Lacedæmon, the citizens were engaged in celebrating the public games, and an immense concourse of strangers attended that solemnity. The fatal intelligence spread a general alarm; but the

narrative, in the whole of which he never once mentions the name of either Pelopidas or Epaminondas, to whom, not only Plutarch, but the general voice of the ancient authors, has attributed the principal agency in this revolution.

Ephori, with admirable presence of mind, ordered the games to proceed without interruption. The best method of blunting the edge of misfortune is to brave it. The parents and relations of those who had fallen in battle, went, next day, in solemn procession, to thank the gods that their sons had died in the bed of glory; while the relatives of those who had escaped, were overwhelmed with shame and affliction.

The petty states of Greece always took part with a victorious power. Epaminondas, determined to push his success, and to penetrate into Laconia, found his little army speedily increased to seventy thousand men. With this force he might have razed Lacedæmon to the ground, and abolished the Spartan name: but he was satisfied with having checked their insolence and perfidy; and he returned to Thebes, after having rebuilt the city of Megalopolis, where he collected the Arcadians, and repeopled Messene, from which the Spartans had driven out the inhabitants; thus re-establishing, almost under the walls of Sparta, two of her ancient and most inveterate enemies.

The history of the Grecian states affords too many examples of their repaying the highest efforts of virtue and patriotism with ingratitude, instead of the rewards of honour and popularity. Epaminondas and Pelopidas, on their return to Thebes, were accused of having retained their command four months beyond the term of their commissions, while engaged in the Peloponnesian expedition. This, on the specious pretext of a strict regard to military duty, was adjudged to be a capital offence, and the people were on the point of condemning to death those men who had not only rescued their country from servitude, but raised the Theban name to the highest pitch of glory. Epaminondas undertook to defend the conduct of Pelopidas, by taking the whole blame upon himself. "I was," said he, "the author of those measures for which we stand here accused. I had indulged a hope that the signal success which, under our conduct, has attended

the Theban arms, would have entitled us to the gratitude, and not to the censure of our country. Well! let posterity, then, be informed of our crimes and of our punishment. Let it be known that Epaminondas led your troops into the heart of Laconia, which no hostile power till then had ever penetrated; that his crime was that he abased the glory of Sparta, and brought her to the brink of ruin; that he made Thebes the most illustrious of the Grecian states; let it be inscribed on his tomb, that death was the reward which his country decreed for these services." The Thebans were ashamed of their own conduct; the judges dismissed the charge, and the people atoned for their ingratitude by the strongest expressions of praise and admiration.

Yet this rectitude of feeling was only temporary. All the states of Peloponnesus supported by Thebes were at war with Sparta. The other republics, however, and principally Athens, were inflamed with jealousy of the Theban power, and, uniting in a league to curb its ascendancy, they applied for aid from Persia. To counteract this co-operation, the Thebans sent Pelopidas to Artaxerxes, who convinced him that it was more for his real interest to countenance and support their infant power, which could give no jealousy or alarm to his empire, than to add weight to those great republics, which had always been at variance with him. Artaxerxes declared himself the ally of Thebes. The Greek ambassadors were all dismissed, loaded with magnificent presents; Pelopidas alone refused them. In the assembly of the people at Athens, a porter ludicrously proposed that, instead of nine annual archons, they should elect nine ambassadors of the poorest of the people, and send them every year to Persia.

Epaminondas, at this time, made another descent upon Peloponnesus, when he was opposed by the Spartans, the Athenians, and Corinthians. He was at first successful, but, overpowered at last and obliged to

retreat, he returned to Thebes, where his ill fortune was construed into treason, and he was deprived of all command. We shall presently see his fickle countrymen once more disposed to rate his services at their true value.

Macedonia, a few years before this period, was in a state of civil war, from the quarrels for sovereignty which arose between the two sons of Amyntas, upon the death of their father. The Macedonians solicited aid from the Thebans to compose the disorders of their country, and Pelopidas was for that purpose sent thither with an army. He effected the object of his mission by placing Perdiccas on the throne of Macedonia, and he carried with him to Thebes, Philip, the brother of Perdiccas, with thirty of the young nobility, as hostages for the security of this settlement. This was Philip, afterward the king of Macedon, and father of Alexander the Great; a youth who so profitably employed his time in the study of the art of war under those two able masters, Pelopidas and Epaminondas, that from them he acquired that military knowledge which afterward proved so fatal to the liberties of Greece.

The people of Thessaly, alarmed at the ambitious designs of Alexander, the *tyrant* of Pheræ, who aimed at reducing the whole states under his own dominion, solicited the aid of the Thebans to protect their liberties. The Thebans complied with their request, and Pelopidas, sent into Thessaly as an ambassador, to hear the subject of complaint, and to mediate on the part of Thebes, was, in contempt of the law of nations, seized by Alexander and thrown into prison. The Thebans justly resenting this gross outrage, sent an army against the tyrant, and Epaminondas, eager to co-operate in the delivery of his friend Pelopidas, but debarred by the late decree from all military command, joined himself as a private soldier to the expedition. The Theban forces were encountered in the field by an army greatly superior in numbers; and such was the

pusillanimity of their generals, that they were on the point of making an ignominious retreat, when the spirit of the troops was roused by the strong feeling of impending disgrace. They compelled their generals to yield the command to Epaminondas, who very speedily turned the fortune of the day, and, after repulsing the tyrant, obliged him to offer terms of accommodation, of which the first condition was the release and restitution of Pelopidas. This signal service of Epaminondas, though performed, as we have seen, at the expense of a new infringement of military duty, the very offence for which he had lately so severely suffered, was now rewarded by the universal applause of his country and a complete reinstatement in all his former honours and popularity.

Pelopidas had no sooner recovered his liberty than he resolved to wreak his vengeance against the *tyrant* of Pheræ. At the head of a new expedition for this purpose, he encountered Alexander at Cynocephalæ, and gave him a complete defeat; but eager to engage the tyrant whom he challenged to single combat in the field, he unwarily exposed himself to a shower of javelins from the enemy, and fell pierced with numberless wounds. The Thebans justly considered their victory as dearly purchased by the loss of this most brave and virtuous citizen. The Thebans and Thessalonians jointly performed his funeral obsequies with the most distinguished pomp and magnificence. The tyrant of Pheræ was soon after assassinated by his wife and her brothers, who avenged by this blow their own and their country's injuries.

A new war now broke out between Thebes and Sparta, on account of a quarrel between the Tegeans and Mantineans, the former protected by the Thebans, the latter by the Lacedæmonians and Athenians. Epaminondas made another attempt upon Lacedæmon, which owed its preservation to the conduct and bravery of Agesilaus. The Theban general, on receiving intelligence that the best of the Spartan

troops, with Agesilaus at their head, were on their march to Mantinea, judged this a most seasonable opportunity for an attack on Sparta, which, having no walls, he expected to seize in the night without any opposition. Agesilaus, however, getting a hint of his design, had just time to apprize the city of its danger, and the Thebans had already penetrated into the heart of it; when, to the surprise of Epaminondas, he found himself vigorously attacked by Agesilaus himself and his brave son, Archidamus, with the flower of the Spartan youth, who displayed the greatest courage in making head against the invaders. The Thebans were now forced to make a precipitate retreat. This unsuccessful enterprise was the more galling to Epaminondas, that the term of his military command was just about to expire. He earnestly wished to compensate for his failure by some splendid stroke against the enemy. The Spartan troops, as we have seen, had been suddenly called off from Mantinea to defend their city. Epaminondas now attempted by a rapid march to surprise and seize Mantinea; but in the meantime its garrison had been reinforced by an Athenian army, which met the Thebans in front, on their approach to the town, while the Spartans, aware of their design, were following close upon their rear. An engagement now ensued, one of the most celebrated in the Grecian history. The army of the Thebans amounted to thirty thousand foot and three thousand horse; that of the Lacedæmonians and their allies to twenty thousand foot and two thousand horse.

The battle was fought with the most desperate courage on both sides. The detail of particulars is to be found in Xenophon, Diodorus, and other historians. The judicious disposition of the Theban army, and their movements during the engagement, showed the profound military skill of their general. In the heat of the battle, the Thebans having broken and repulsed the Lacedæmonian phalanx, Epaminondas, too rashly

pursuing his success, had advanced beyond the line of his troops, when the enemy rallying, he was exposed to a whole shower of darts, and fell, pierced with numberless wounds. His faithful Thebans found means to rescue his body while life yet remained, and to bring him to his tent. A javelin stuck fast in his breast, and his physician declared that on extracting it he would immediately expire. In this extremity, breathless and fainting, while his friends stood weeping around him, he first inquired what was become of his shield, and being told that it was safe, he beckoned to have it brought to him, and kissed it.

He then asked which side had gained the victory, and being told it was the Thebans, "Then," said he, "all is well." While some of his friends were lamenting his untimely fall, and regretting that he had left no children to perpetuate his memory; "Yes," said he, "I have left two fair daughters, *Leuctra* and *Mantinea*—these will perpetuate my memory:"—so saying, with his own hands he drew forth the javelin from his breast, and instantly expired.

The ancient historians have ranked Epaminondas among the greatest heroes and most illustrious characters of antiquity. *Epaminondas princeps meo judicio Græciæ*,* says Cicero. As a general, there needs no other criterion of his merit than to compare the situation in which he found his country, enslaved, oppressed, weak, and inconsiderable, with that in which he left it, the most formidable power in Greece. As a private citizen, his social virtues, the generosity of his disposition, a total disregard of wealth, which his high employments gave him an easy opportunity of accumulating; his eminent philosophical and literary genius, and above all, a modest simplicity of demeanour, which added lustre to all his numerous accomplishments, were the distinguishing features of his

* Epaminondas, in my opinion, the most illustrious of the Greeks.

character. With him the glory of his country may be said to have been born and to have died; for, from the inauspicious day of his death, the Theban power vanished at once, and that Bœotian republic sunk again into its original obscurity.

Athens and Sparta were humbled in the battle of Mantinea. Thebes was victorious, but she was undone by the death of Epaminondas. All parties were now disposed to peace, and Artaxerxes, more powerful among those infatuated states than in his own dominions of Persia, dictated the terms of the treaty. It was stipulated that each of the states should retain what it then possessed, and that all should enjoy their liberties independent of each other. The Spartans alone refused their assent to this treaty, unwilling to relinquish that control which they considered as their right over some of their tributary cities.

Artaxerxes soon after died of a broken heart. Darius, his eldest son, together with fifty of his natural brothers, had conspired against their father, but their designs were defeated, and they were all put to death. Ochus, the third of his lawful sons, succeeded him. This monster had made his way to the throne by murdering his elder brother, and, to secure his possession, he murdered all that remained of his kindred.

This treaty recently concluded among the states of Greece was fatal in its consequences to the glory of the nation. The greater republics, exhausted and weakened by the war, and now abridged in their power and resources by the independence of the smaller states, were alternately sunk in indolence and apathy, and embroiled by civil contentions. The inferior republics, who derived weight and consideration chiefly from their alliance with the great states who were their protectors, were now forced, in all their quarrels with each other, to rely upon their own strength. No general object united the nation, which now became a discordant mass of unequal and independent parts. In addition to these symptoms of de-

cline, luxury was extending her baneful influence, in enervating and corrupting the patriotic spirit. A taste for the productions of the fine arts, and a passionate pursuit of pleasure, had in the Athenian republic particularly, entirely supplanted heroic virtue. Poets, musicians, sculptors, and comedians, were now the only great men of Attica. While the bewitching dramas of Sophocles and Euripides charmed the ears, and the sculptures of Phidias, of Glycon, and Praxitiles fascinated the eyes of the refined and voluptuous Athenians, military glory was forgotten; and the defence of the state, no longer the care of its citizens, was committed to mercenaries, who filled both its fleets and its armies. Even in Sparta, luxury had begun to spread her contagion; while her power was shaken by the general treaty, which, though rejected on her part, gave sufficient warrant to all her dependent cities to renounce their allegiance.

In this declining situation of Greece, while she offered a tempting object of ambition to the designs either of a foreign conqueror or a domestic tyrant, the prince of a small monarchy, hitherto quite inconsiderable, began to meditate an attack against her general liberties. This was Philip of Macedon; the same youth whom, as we have observed, a few years before, Pelopidas had carried a hostage to Thebes in security of that establishment he had made, in placing Perdiccas II. on the throne, and composing the disorders of his kingdom.

Philip, while in Thebes, had been the companion of Epaminondas, the pupil of his father Polymnis, and had shared in those excellent lessons which formed the illustrious Theban to be the support and glory of his country. The house of Polymnis, at Thebes, was the resort of the most learned and virtuous men of that country. There Lysidas, of Tarentum, read his lectures on philosophy; a science in which Epaminondas was no less eminent, by the testimony of all antiquity, than he was in the talents of a great military

leader. It was in the latter character rather than the former that he served as a model to the young Philip, who, though of acute talents, had neither the virtues nor the cultivated mind of the illustrious Theban. The abilities of Philip raised him to the throne, which was then filled by his nephew Amyntas, the son of his elder brother Perdiccas. The Macedonians declared they wanted not a child, but a man, to be their governor. If great military talents, unbounded ambition, with profound political sagacity, could, in a sovereign, compensate for the want of moral qualities and the absence of every generous virtue, Philip was not unworthy to wear a crown.

Scarcely was he seated on the throne, when he was attacked from every quarter. The Illyrians and the Pæonians made inroads upon his territories. Two rival princes, Pausanias and Argæus, relations of the last monarch, disputed his title, each claiming the sovereignty for himself. The Thracians armed for Pausanias, the Athenians for Argæus. Philip disarmed the Pæonians by bribes and promises. The Thracians were won by a similar policy. He gained a victory over the Athenians, in which his rival Argæus lost his life; and having thus accomplished the security of his title to the throne, he attained with the people of Athens the character of extreme moderation and generosity, by sending back to their country, without ransom, all the prisoners he had taken in battle.

In this manner, by the most dexterous policy, he removed a part of his enemies, that he might have the rest at his mercy. Hitherto his conduct might in general be justified; for, as yet, his interest had not prompted him to act a dishonourable part. No man wantonly, or through choice, throws away his character. But Philip knew no other motive of action but his own interest; and he had no scruples as to the means of accomplishing it. Artifices of every kind, dissimulation, perfidy, breach of promises, and oaths, were with Philip the ordinary and necessary engines

of government. Corruption was his favourite instrument. It was a maxim of his, that no fortification was impregnable into which a mule could make its way with a bag of money. Philip, in his designs against the liberties of Greece, found occasion to employ the utmost extent of his political address, and to exercise alternately every talent of which he was possessed. He had his pensioners in all the republics, whose care it was to give him intelligence of every measure, to form a party in his interest, and on all occasions when his enterprises were called in question, to justify his designs and vindicate his proceedings. In Athens, he had in this character Æschines the orator devoted to his interest, and two comedians, Aristodemus and Neoptolemus, men of high influence in the public assemblies. With these illustrious characters in his interest, Philip was at ease with respect to the Athenians.

In the same manner securing his partisans in the other republics, it was now only necessary to set them at variance with each other, that his alliance might be courted, and an opportunity furnished for introducing the Macedonian troops into Greece. The miserable policy and imprudence of the principal republics accomplished his wishes, without giving him even the trouble of an effort.

The Phocians had ploughed up some of the lands which belonged to the temple of Apollo, at Delphos, were cited on that account before the Amphictyonic council, and condemned to pay a heavy fine. Instead of submitting to this decree, they now pretended that the custody of the temple and all its patrimony belonged of right to them; and they boldly seized the sacred edifice with the whole of its treasures. These proceedings put all Greece into a flame. The Phocians had some plausible reasons to assign in support of their claim; otherwise we cannot suppose that the Athenians and Spartans would have espoused their cause, in opposition to most of the other states of

Greece, who regarded their conduct as highly sacrilegious. The Thebans, the Thessalians, and the Locrians, armed in the cause of Apollo, and took a most active part in what was termed the *sacred war*. The spirit of hostility acquired additional rancour from religious zeal; and both sides adopted the sanguinary policy of giving no quarter in battle, and putting to death their prisoners without mercy. The Theban general, Philomelus, found himself in this last predicament, and seeing no possibility of escaping out of the hands of a body of the enemy who had surrounded him, threw himself headlong over a precipice.

The sacred war had lasted for some time. Philip of Macedon, in the meantime, was gradually extending his territories, and had already, by conquest, made himself master of a great part of Thrace, when the Thessalians implored his assistance against their tyrant Lycophron, the brother and successor of Alexander of Pheræ, whose government they felt yet more intolerable than that of his predecessor. The tyrant had sought aid of the Phocians to support him against his own subjects, who, on their part, were thus fully justified in courting the assistance of the Macedonians to protect their liberties. After several engagements of various issue, Philip prevailed in driving the Phocians completely out of Thessaly; and Lycophron, finding himself unable to cope with the Macedonian power, resigned his sovereignty and put Philip in possession of his capital of Pheræ.

A short time before this period, his queen, Olympias, the daughter of Neoptolemus, king of Epirus, was delivered at Pella, in the first year of the 106th Olympiad (356 B. C.), of a son, Alexander, justly denominated the Great. On this event, Philip wrote to the philosopher Aristotle in these emphatic words, truly worthy of a king: "Know that a son is born to us. We thank the gods, first, for their excellent gift; and, secondly, that it is bestowed in the age of Aristotle,

who we trust will render him a son worthy of his father, and a prince worthy of Macedonia."*

The success which had hitherto attended the arms and the policy of Philip, inspired him now with the daring ambition of rendering himself the arbiter and sovereign of Greece. The retreat of the Phocians from Thessaly furnished him with the plausible pretext of advancing with his troops to Thermopylæ, in order to enter the country of Phocis; while his real design was to secure that important pass, which opened to him the territory of Attica. This was a bold attempt; for no foreign power had ever passed that gate of Greece, since the defeat of the Persians at Platæa. The Athenians were justly alarmed, not less for their own safety than for the general liberties of the nation; and they owed the energy of their conduct on this occasion to the manly eloquence and patriotism of Demosthenes.

Demosthenes, the prince of the Grecian orators, now made the first display of his eminent talents. He had no advantages of birth or education. His father, a sword-cutler, or, as Juvenal has termed him, a blacksmith, left him an orphan at the age of seven, to the care of profligate guardians, who robbed him of his small patrimony. But he possessed that native genius which surmounts every disadvantage of birth or situation. Ambition prompted him to the study of oratory; for, going one day to the court to hear the pleadings in some cause of moment, he was so impressed with the eloquence of Callistratus, and so fired by the popular applause bestowed on that orator upon

* Aristotle, by birth a Stagyrite, came to Athens at the age of eighteen, and was for twenty years a scholar of Plato, who died 348 B. C. In the forty-third year of his age he went to Macedonia, and was for eight years employed in the education of Alexander: at the end of which period he returned to Athens, 335 B. C., and taught for twelve years in the Lycæum. He died in his sixty-third year, 322 B. C., a year after the death of his illustrious pupil.

his gaining the suit in which he had pleaded, that he determined from that moment that this should be his road to eminence and distinction. No man, in this arduous course, ever struggled with greater natural obstacles, or more happily overcame them. His voice was harsh and uncouth, his articulation indistinct, and his gestures awkward and constrained; but, sensible of his defects, he laboured day and night in private exercises of elocution, till he completely subdued them; and then confident of his powers, he broke forth at once the most distinguished orator of his age. He had in this emergency of public affairs a noble field of exertion. On the first intelligence that Philip was on his march to Thermopylæ, Demosthenes ascended the tribunal in the Ecclesia, and in a most animated harangue roused the patriotic ardour of his countrymen, by painting to them, in striking colours, the ambitious designs of this artful and enterprising prince; and urged the absolute necessity of an immediate and most vigorous effort for the preservation of the national liberty. His eloquence was successful. The Athenians instantly flew to arms, and arrived at Thermopylæ in sufficient time to defend the entry to the straits. Philip was disconcerted at this unexpected proof of hostility from the Athenians, with whom he had taken the utmost pains by every means to ingratiate himself; but he was too prudent to hazard a premature discovery of the extent of his ambitious views. He made a plausible pretext for withdrawing his troops to the northward, and postponed for that time his vengeance against the sacrilegious Phocians. The Athenians, imposed on by this politic conduct, began to consider their fears of danger as altogether groundless, and were lulled into a pleasing dream of perfect security.

The sacred war had now lasted about ten years; and every campaign had given a fresh acquisition of power to the daring and politic Macedonian. The Athenians, finding no advantage on their part, and heartily tired of hostilities, which gave too much in-

terruption to their favourite ease and luxurious enjoyments, sent ambassadors to Philip with instructions to negotiate a general peace. But he bribed the ambassadors, spun out the negotiations, and in the meantime proceeded in the most vigorous prosecution of the war.

This conduct might have opened the eyes of the Athenians, had not their corrupted orators, the pensionaries of Philip, laboured assiduously to foster their blind security. "The interests of Philip," said Æschines, "are the same with your own. Why therefore this groundless jealousy and alarm at all his motions? Let him once pass Thermopylæ, and you will see what will be his conduct. His darling object is the destruction of your enemies. His design is to subdue Thebes, that insolent rival of the Athenian power and sovereignity. In this enterprise he wishes only to co-operate with yourselves; and when accomplished, as it speedily must be, by your joint endeavours, Athens has then the full command of Greece." This infatuated people were actually the dupes of such chimeras.

The Athenians withdrew their army from Thermopylæ; Philip poured down like a torrent upon the country of Phocis, and carrying all before him, presented himself at Delphos as the avenger of Apollo. He then hastily assembled the Amphictyonic council, taking care previously to sound the deputies of the several states, and to admit only such as were devoted to his interest. The assembly, thus prepared, passed a decree which declared the Phocians to have forfeited their place in that general council, which henceforth should be supplied by the king of Macedon, whom, in consideration of his important services, they appointed to preside at the Pythian games, jointly with the Thebans and Thessalians. Thus, by the most artful policy, Philip had acquired the rights of a naturalized Greek; his dominions of Macedonia now formed a part of the body of the nation, and he had henceforth an undisputed title to take a part in all such measures as regarded the general and national interests.

From that moment Philip became the arbiter of Greece, and the umpire in all differences between her contending states. While the more powerful republics courted his friendship to assist them in their ambitious designs against each other, or against the liberty of the smaller states, these, on the other hand, solicited his protection to defend their rights against lawless usurpation and tyranny. Others, again, who fell under neither of these descriptions, but were embroiled with faction at home, besought his aid to compose their domestic dissensions, and would have cheerfully parted with their liberty to rid themselves of the miseries of tumult and anarchy.

In this situation of Greece, the politics of Demosthenes, who incessantly endeavoured to rouse the Athenians to a vigorous opposition to the designs of Philip, and incite them to declare open war against this ambitious prince, have been by some writers censured as imprudent and pernicious; and it is no doubt a truth that some of the best patriots of Athens, the virtuous Phocion for example, were of this opinion, and proposed an opposite counsel. They saw that the martial spirit of the republic was extinct, the finances of the state were at the lowest ebb, and the manners of the people irretrievably corrupted. There was assuredly too much solidity in the argument of Phocion which he opposed to the *Philippica* of Demosthenes:—"I will recommend to you, O Athenians, to go to war, when I find you capable of supporting a war; when I see the youth of the republic animated with courage, yet submissive and obedient; the rich cheerfully contributing to the necessities of the state; and the orators no longer cheating and pillaging the public." But granting the verisimilitude of this degrading picture, was it not a noble attempt of Demosthenes to revive the martial spirit, to stimulate by shame the indolence of his countrymen, to hold up in glowing colours to their view the striking contrast between the days of former glory and of present disgrace, and to excite to some

great and patriotic exertion for the recovery of the national honour and the preservation of their liberties?

When Athens was thus roused to a vigorous exertion for the preservation of Grecian freedom, it was surely to be hoped, and confidently expected, that she was not to stand alone in that noble effort of patriotism. But even had none of the other republics followed her example, and joined her standards, that circumstance, instead of diminishing, must have signally enhanced her honour, and afforded the only possible consolation in the event that the issue was unprosperous. "No," said Demosthenes, in a tone of animation which fired the whole assembly, "it can never be to your reproach that you have braved dangers and death for the safety and freedom of your country. I swear it by our brave forefathers, by the manes of those illustrious men who fell at Marathon, at Platæa, and at Salamis, by their sacred ashes which sleep with honour in the public monuments."* It was in a similar strain of glowing eloquence that Demosthenes roused the torpid spirits of his countrymen to a vigorous effort to preserve their independence against the designs of this artful and ambitious prince; and Philip had just reason to say that he was more afraid of *that man* than of all the fleets and armies of the Athenians. It was highly, therefore, to the honour of the Athenians that they listened to the counsels of this excellent orator, and, however unequal to the contest, determined that they would dearly sell their freedom. The Thebans joined them in this noble resolution, persuaded likewise by the eloquence of Demosthenes, who went thither as ambassador from Athens to form an alliance for their joint interests against the Macedonian. It was now no shame to court the aid of Persia; and a league was formed likewise with the islands of Rhodes, Cos, and Chios. A fleet was armed under the command of Chares to relieve Byzantium, then besieged by Philip;

* Demosth. Orat. pro Corona.

but Chares, of whom the allies had no favourable opinion, was soon after superseded by Phocion; for this illustrious man, though in his private judgment more inclined to peace, was in war justly regarded as the main support of his country's honour and glory.

Phocion delivered Byzantium and Perinthus from the yoke of Macedon, drove Philip out of the Chersonesus, and took several of his dependant cities. The Macedonian loudly complained of the Athenians, as having first commenced hostilities; and the artful dissembler, still further to preserve a show of moderation, requested a renewal of the peace. A negotiation for that purpose was prolonged by him for two years. Demosthenes still raised his voice for war. It was upon this occasion that the Athenians, having consulted the Delphian oracle, which advised them to make peace, Demosthenes, in an animated harangue, openly insinuated that the oracle was corrupted by declaring that the *Pythia Philippised.* The eloquence of the orator prevailed over the counsel of the hireling priestess, and the Athenians took the field in great force, joined by the Thebans and their other allies. It was the interest of Philip, who had long wished, and, consequently, prepared himself for a fair trial of strength, to bring his enemy as soon as possible to a general engagement. This the Athenians ought of course to have as earnestly avoided; but the disunion of counsels, which commonly attends allied armies, was the cause of a fatal resolution to abide a decisive issue. This took place in the field of Chæronea.

The Macedonian army amounted to thirty thousand foot and two thousand horse; that of the Athenians and their allies was nearly equal in number. The left wing of the Macedonians was commanded by the young Alexander, and it was his fortune to be opposed to that body of the Thebans called the *sacred band;* the courage of the combatants on both sides was therefore inflamed by a high principle of honour. The attack of Alexander was impetuous beyond all descrip-

tion, but was sustained with the most determined bravery on the part of the Thebans; and had the courage and conduct of their allies given them an adequate support, the fortune of the day would probably have been fatal to the Macedonians; but, unaided by the timely co-operation of the main body of the Greeks, the *sacred band* were left alone to sustain this desperate assault, and they fought till the whole of these noble Thebans lay dead upon the field. The Athenians, however, on their part, had made a most vigorous attack on the centre of the Macedonian army, and broke and put to flight a great body of the enemy. Philip, at the head of his formidable phalanx, was not engaged in the fight, but coolly withheld his attack till he saw the Greeks pursuing their success against the centre with a tumultuous impetuosity. He then charged them in the rear with the whole strength and solidity of his phalanx opposed to their deranged and disorderly battalions. The aspect of affairs was now quite changed, and the Grecian army, after a desperate conflict, was broken and entirely put to flight. Two thousand Greeks were made prisoners, and Philip gained the praise of great clemency by checking the slaughter of the Athenians and sparing the lives of all his captives. It was now his policy to sooth and conciliate the minds of that people whom he wished henceforth to rule as a legitimate sovereign. This decisive engagement, which, in its immediate consequences, put an end to the liberties of Greece, was fought in the year 338 before Christ.

The Athenians sought a desperate consolation in attributing their defeat at Chæronea to the fault of their generals Lysidas and Chares. The former they condemned to death; the latter owed his life to the boldness and intrepidity with which he made his defence.

Demosthenes had fled from the field of battle; so different is speculative from active courage. Yet the merits of this illustrious man were not forgotten,

though the issue of his counsels had been unsuccessful. He was intrusted by the Athenians with the charge of rebuilding the walls of the city, and a crown of gold was decreed to him, at the suggestion of Ctesiphon, as the reward of his public services. This mark of honour excited the jealousy of his rival Æschines, and gave rise to that famous controversy περι Στεφάνου, (i. e. *concerning the crown*)—which produced two of the most animated orations that are preserved to us of the composition of the ancients. Demosthenes came off triumphant, and his opponent was banished from his country. Cicero, in his third book "De Oratore," (on oratory) c. 56, has recorded a very beautiful anecdote on this occasion. Æschines, in exile among the Rhodians, amused himself with reciting to that people some of his own orations. Among others, he rehearsed to them that which he had spoken against Demosthenes in the cause of *the crown*. The Rhodians expressed a desire to hear what his opponent had answered to a composition so powerful and convincing. He then read them, wi proper modulation of voice and emphasis, the oration of Demosthenes, which, when they had all united in admiring—"Think now, my friends," said he, "how much greater must have been your admiration had you heard that extraordinary man himself recite this masterly composition." A singular instance indeed of his generosity of mind, who could thus do justice to the merits of a rival, whose success and triumph had been the cause of his own disgrace.

It may be justly said that of all those sciences which deserve the name of manly or truly dignified, eloquence was the only one which yet continued to flourish in Greece.

After the battle of Chæronea all the states of Greece submitted to the conqueror. But it was not the policy of Philip to treat them as a conquered people. He kn that the Greeks must be very cautiously managed. He endeavoured to withdraw their minds from

all idea of the degraded condition to which they were now reduced. His views had pointed to a greater object of ambition than the sovereignty of Greece; and in proposing to them the conquest of Persia, he withdrew their attention from the galling thought of their own servitude, while he flattered their self-consequence by making the Greeks the partners in his own schemes of extensive dominion. It was a natural preparatory measure to appoint Philip the generalissimo of the nation.

At this period the Persian monarchy was embroiled with the revolt of several of the provinces. Ochus had reduced them less by force of arms than by corrupting and bringing over to his interest the heads of the rebellion. Mentor of Rhodes delivered up to him the Sidonians, who, when they discovered that they were betrayed, set fire to their city and perished in the flames. The dreadful catastrophe of Sidon was followed by the submission of all Phœnicia; and Cyprus, which had likewise revolted, returned soon after to its allegiance. Mentor's services were rewarded by the Persian monarch with the government of all the Asiatic coasts. Ochus did not long enjoy the pacification of his empire. Bagoas, a favourite eunuch, poisoned him and all his children, except Arses, the youngest, whose infancy afforded the murderer the prospect of governing Persia as his tutor; but dreading the punishment of his crimes, he thought it his safest policy to raise to the throne a prince of the royal blood, Darius, surnamed Codomannus, who is said to have been the grandson of Darius Nothus.

Such was the state of Persia, when Philip prepared for his great enterprise, by sending his lieutenants Attalus and Parmenio into Asia. As usual before all expeditions of importance, he consulted the Delphic oracle, and received the following response, equally applicable to the prosperous or unsuccessful event of the war:—*The bull is read crowned; his end approaches, and he will soon be sacrificed.* "The prophecy," said

Philip, "is quite clear; the bull is the monarch of Persia." The prediction speedily found its accomplishment, but Philip himself was the victim. While engaged in celebrating a magnificent festival on the marriage of his daughter Cleopatra with the king of Epirus, and walking in solemn procession to the temple, he was struck into the heart with a dagger by Pausanias, a noble youth who had been brutally injured by Attalus, the brother-in-law of Philip, and to whom that prince had refused to do justice. Philip had in the latter period of his reign degraded himself by some strong acts of tyranny, the fruit of an uncontrolled indulgence of vicious appetites. As the pretext of a divorce from his queen Olympias, the mother of Alexander, he threw the most unjust suspicions upon her character, and drove her son from court in disgust at the conduct of his father, who now assumed Cassandra, the niece of Attalus, who had captivated him by the charms of her person, into the place of his injured queen. The disgust which Alexander justly conceived at these proceedings, encouraged a suspicion, for which however there are no solid grounds, that he was privy to the design of Pausanias.

The Athenians with much meanness, expressed, on the occasion of Philip's death, the most tumultuous joy. A solemn sacrifice of thanksgiving was offered to the gods, and a crown of gold decreed to Pausanias in reward of his services to the nation. It is probable that a gleam of hope arose from this event that the liberty of Greece might yet be recovered; but they were strangers at this time to the character of that youth who now succeeded to the throne of Macedonia.

CHAPTER IV.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT takes and destroys Thebes—Submission of the Grecian States—Alexander declared General of the Armies of Greece—Battle of the Granicus—Issus—Siege of Tyre—Expedition into Egypt—Battle of Arbela—Alexander at Persepolis—Expedition to India—Return to Susa—Enters Babylon, and dies—Division of his Empire—Kingdom of Egypt—of Syria.

ALEXANDER was in the twentieth year of his age, when he succeeded, by the death of Philip, to the throne of Macedonia. This prince, possessed of all the military abilities of his father, inherited a soul more truly noble, and an ambition yet more unbounded. He had from his infancy given proofs of that singular heroism of character, which marked the conqueror of the eastern world. To extraordinary endowments of nature he had joined all the advantages of education. Under the tutelage of the philosopher Aristotle, he imbibed not only a taste for learning and the sciences, but those excellent lessons of politics, in which that great teacher was qualified, beyond all his contemporaries, to instruct him.

On the first intelligence of the death of Philip, the Greeks, and particularly the citizens of Athens, exhibited that pitiful exultation, which only evinced their own pusillanimity. The Macedonian heir they regarded as a mere boy, from whom the liberties of Greece could never be in serious hazard; as he would, they conceived, find sufficient employment both for his policy and prowess in securing the stability of his hereditary throne against domestic faction. Lest, however, the example of Philip might encourage his son to similar schemes of ambition, the Athenians thought it a prudent measure to form an offensive and defensive league with several of the Grecian states against the new king of Macedonia, with the view of maintaining entire the national independence. Alex-

ander beheld these measures in silence: the time was not yet come for the full display of that great plan of empire, which his comprehensive mind had formed. The Thracians, however, with the Pæonians and Illyrians having made the death of Philip the signal of emancipation from the newly imposed yoke of Macedon, Alexander made the first essay of his arms against these barbarous nations, whose revolt he chastised with the most signal severity.*

The Greeks were speedily roused from their dream of security: but their surprise was extreme when they beheld the Macedonian pour down with his army upon Bœotia, and present himself at the gates of Thebes. The Thebans, on a false report of his death in battle against the Illyrians, had expelled the Macedonian garrison, and put to death its commanders, Amyntas and Timolaus. Alexander offered pardon to the city on condition of absolute submission, and the delivering up of the principal offenders. The Thebans were obstinate, and the consequence was, that Thebes was taken by storm, and abandoned to the fury of the Macedonian troops, who plundered and destroyed it. Six thousand of the inhabitants were put to the sword, and thirty thousand sold into slavery. The priests, however, with their families, were treated with reverence; and while the streets and fortifications of the city were reduced to a mass of ruins, the conqueror showed his respect to the memory of Pindar, by preserving from destruction the great poet's house, which was still occupied by his descendants.

This exemplary severity struck terror throughout all Greece. The Athenians, elevated with the smallest glimse of good fortune, were the first to show an abasement of spirit. They had received after the fall of Thebes, a part of the fugitive citizens. For this act of humanity they now thought it necessary

* For ample details of this and of all the subsequent campaigns of Alexander, see vol. iii. of the Family Library.

to apologize, by sending an embassy to Alexander, to deprecate his wrath, and to assure him of their sincere desire to maintain a friendly alliance. The Macedonian, contemning them the more for the meanness of this behaviour, made a peremptory demand that they should deliver up to him the persons of Demosthenes, Lycurgus, and six others of the principal demagogues, to whose seditious harangues he attributed the hostile spirit they had shown to all his measures. He did not, however, wish to push matters to extremity. The business was finally compromised by a public decree, by which the Athenians pledged themselves to institute a strict inquiry into the alleged ground of offence, and to inflict such punishment as the crimes, if proved, should merit.

The submission of Athens was followed by friendly embassies, and offers of peace and alliance from all the states of Greece. Alexander now summoned a general council of deputies, from all the several republics, to assemble at Corinth, with the purpose of deliberating on a measure which regarded their common interests and honour. Here he formally intimated to them his design of following out the great project of his father, the conquest of Persia. The design was flattering to the Greeks, who had ever regarded the Persians as an irreconcileable enemy, the object of hereditary hatred and jealousy; and in whose destruction they pleased themselves with the prospect of regaining the honourable ascendancy they had once enjoyed above all the contemporary nations. Animated with this feeling, they received the proposal of Alexander with exultation; and already anticipating the triumphs to be gained under his banners, they hailed him commander-in-chief of the united armies of Greece.

The preparations commenced by Philip were continued by Alexander during the few months of winter that preceded the opening of this important campaign; but active as we may believe those preparations were, they

bore no proportion to the magnitude of the enterprise. In fact, the chief prospect of its success arose, not from the strength of the invader, but from the weakness of the invaded empire. We have already remarked* the very defective system of government in this extensive monarchy, and the total want of all principle of union between the members of so vast a body. The people, over whom their governors or satraps tyrannized with the most absolute authority, were quite indifferent to any changes that might take place in the seat of empire. Thus we have seen a eunuch depose and put to death one monarch with all his descendants, and place another on the throne, without producing any other effects than might have followed in other kingdoms, upon a sovereign changing his first minister. The truth is, that the general peace of the empire had ever arisen out of its general weakness. The provinces had as little communication with each other as they had with the capital; and these separate and independent bodies had not even the slight bond of union which arises from a common religion. A despot of high spirit and a vigorous mind might have kept in order this discordant mass; but such was not the character of the present monarch. Darius Codomannus, who owed his elevation to the eunuch Bagoas, was a prince possessed of many amiable qualities—of a gentle and humane disposition; who might have swayed with honour a pacific sceptre, in a nation enjoying a good political constitution, and governed by wholesome laws; but he was neither qualified to fill the throne of Persia, nor to be the antagonist of Alexander.

This prince, who in all his enterprises never indulged a doubt of his success, set out for Persia in the beginning of spring at the head of an army of thirty-five thousand men, and furnished with provisions only for a single month. He had committed to Antipater

* See Chapter II. of this book toward the conclusion.

the government of Macedonia, in his absence. With this inconsiderable army, but excellently disciplined, and commanded by many brave and able officers, who had gained experience under the banner of his father Philip, he arrived in six days' march at the passage of the Hellespont, and crossed the narrow sea without opposition. While traversing Phrygia, he is reported to have visited the tomb of Achilles; and in an apostrophe to the shade of that great warrior is said to have expressed his envy of his happiness, who in life enjoyed the comfort of a faithful friend, and after his death had his name immortalized by the greatest of poets.

Darius, on the first intelligence of the advance of Alexander with this trifling force, resolved to crush at once this inconsiderate young man, and despatched immediately an army of one hundred thousand foot, and ten thousand horse, to the banks of the Granicus, a small river of Mysia which discharges itself into the Propontis. This measure of the Persian monarch was contrary to the opinion of his ablest generals, who counselled him to follow a more protracted plan of warfare. They advised him to lay waste the provinces through which lay the course of the Macedonian army, and to limit all his attacks to a skirmishing warfare, merely with the view of harassing and wearing out the enemy by fatigue and want of provisions. This is said to have been the counsel of Memnon, Darius's ablest general; who proposed at the same time to conduct an army to Greece and Macedonia, to retaliate upon the invaders in their own territory. But when Darius compared his own force and resources with those of his antagonist, it wore with him the aspect of a mean and dastardly policy, to ruin some of the finest provinces of his empire in the hope of starving the army of his antagonist, instead of manfully encountering him in the field. The latter advice of making a diversion in Macedonia, was more suitable to a manly spirit, and it was accordingly adopted.

Meantime, the Persians, under the command of the Satrap of Phrygia, were drawn up in formidable array upon the eastern bank of the Granicus, to oppose the passage of the Greeks. The river is of inconsiderable breadth and depth, but of great rapidity. The Macedonians, therefore, with judicious precaution, entered the ford a great way higher than the place of the opposite shore on which they meant to land; and crossing in an oblique direction, had the aid of the stream impelling forward their ranks, while its current gave a powerful obstruction to the enemy's entering the river and disputing with them the passage of the ford. Thus a large body of the Grecian army crossed the stream, with no other annoyance than what arose from the missile weapons of the Persians, and the spears that met the first ranks on gaining the opposite shore. No sooner, however, had these made good their ground, and by the spirit of their attack given full occupation to the opposing Persians, than the main body of the Grecian army passed without resistance. The contest was not long doubtful. The Persians are allowed to have fought with great courage; but such was the impression made by the determined resolution and intrepidity of the Greeks, while Alexander himself led them on against the thickest ranks of the enemy, that the Persian army was broken and put to flight, before the rear of the Grecian forces had passed the river. According to the account of Arrian, ten thousand of the Persian infantry and two thousand five hundred horse were slain in the battle of the Granicus. Among these were many officers of distinguished valour and ability. The loss of the Greeks amounted to the trifling number of eighty-five horsemen, and thirty infantry. These were next day buried with their arms, all in the same grave. The rich spoils of the Persian army Alexander sent home to Macedonia to be presented to his mother, as the first-fruits of his success; and to Athens he sent three hundred Persian shields with this message, that these were the trophies of a

victory gained by *the Greeks* under *his command*, over their *ancient enemies.*

The first and most important victory facilitated to Alexander the conquest of all the lesser Asia. Sardis, the capital of the ancient Lydian kingdom, submitted without opposition, and Miletus and Halicarnassus, after a short but vigorous defence, opened their gates to the conqueror. Deriving a presage of continued victory from his first successes, Alexander now sent orders to his fleet to return to Macedonia, thus leaving to his little army one only alternative, that they must conquer or perish. Memnon, in the meantime, had sailed with a body of Persian troops to the coast of Greece. He began by an assault upon some of the islands. He made himself master of Chios, and of the greater part of Lesbos; and had laid siege to Mitylene, its chief city, whence he proposed to pass into Eubœa, and thence into Attica. This well-concerted diversion might, in all probability, have checked the progress of Alexander in Asia. But the death of Memnon destroyed this promising scheme; and the armament returned without effect to the coast of Phœnicia.

Alexander pursuing his course through the lower Asia, it was the counsel of Darius's best officers, that he should await his approach in the plains of Assyria, where there might be ample space for bringing into action the whole of his immense force; but this advice was too mortifying to the pride of the monarch of Persia, who, though of mild and gentle manners, was a man of high spirit and of great personal courage. He was impatient to check the presumption of Alexander, and, advancing to meet him, rashly entered the passes between the mountains of Cilicia, near the town of Issus; a situation where, from the nature of the ground, the greatest part of his army, if then attacked, could not possibly be brought to act with effect against the enemy. Alexander, though then weakened by disease—(the consequence of a fever caught by impru-

dently bathing, when overheated, in the river Cnydus)—no sooner received intelligence of the critical situation of the Persians in the defiles of a mountainous country, than he hastened with the utmost ardour to attack them. Arrian, Quintus Curtius, and Plutarch, have all given different statements of the number of the Persian army at the battle of Issus; but the lowest of these accounts make the number amount to four hundred thousand. The same historians have lavished all the powers of description in painting the splendour, riches, and magnificence of the military equipage of this immense host. That body of the Persians named the Immortals consisted of ten thousand chosen troops, who were clothed in robes of gold embroidery, adorned with precious stones, and wore about their necks massy collars of pure gold. The chariot of Darius was supported by statues of gold; and the beams, axle, and wheels, were studded with precious stones. Ten thousand horsemen followed the chariot with lances plated with silver. The mother and the wife of Darius had their separate chariots, attended by a numerous train of females on horseback; and the pageant was closed by a vast retinue of the wives of the Persian nobles and their children, guarded by some companies of foot lightly armed.

Darius, caught thus at unawares, in the mountains of Cilicia, with this immense, but most inefficient force, was taught, in the battle of Issus, how little confidence is to be placed in numbers when matched against a few experienced and wel-ldisciplined troops. The Persians were defeated with immense slaughter, their loss amounting, as is said, to one hundred and ten thousand men, while that of the Macedonians, according to Diodorus and Quintus Curtius, was no more than four hundred and fifty. Darius himself displayed great personal courage. He fought from his chariot till his horses were wounded, and its course obstructed by the heaps of dead which covered the ground.

I cannot omit observing here, with regard to the history of Alexander written by Quintus Curtius, that, although it is one of the most elegant works that remain to us of the compositions of antiquity, its authority is not to be put on a par with that of Arrian or Diodorus. All accounts, indeed, of the exploits of Alexander must wear an air of the marvellous; for many even of those facts which we know to be strictly true are in themselves prodigious. This consideration, which has rendered Diodorus and Arrian the more cautious in admitting nothing into their narratives but what rested on the strictest historical evidence, has served with Curtius only as a temptation and license for amplification and embellishment. Yet it must be owned that some of those embellishments are in themselves so pleasing, that we can scarcely wish them to have been spared. Such, among others, is that admirable and strongly characteristic oration which Curtius puts into the mouth of the Scythian chief, addressing himself to Alexander: such is that beautiful scene which Curtius describes to have passed in the tent of Darius after the battle of Issus; the error of Sysagambis, the queen-mother, who addressed herself to Hephæstion, mistaking him for Alexander; the fine saying on that occasion of Alexander, *Non errasti, mater, nam et hic Alexander est;** circumstances, indeed, which, Arrian likewise relates, though not with the assurance of their perfect authenticity. There is, he says, such a dignity in the expression, that if we cannot rest on the story as a certainty, we ought at least to wish it to be true. To the honour of Alexander, it must be owned, that generosity was a strong ingredient in his nature; and that the humane affections, though at times overpowered, and apparently extinguished in the heat of passion, certainly formed a part of his genuine character. To the mother and

* You have made no mistake, madam, for he also is Alexander.

to the kindred of Darius, he behaved with the respect and kindness of a son and of a brother, a conduct which made a deep impression on the mind of that generous and ill-fated prince.

Darius, with a few scattered remains of his army, had made a precipitate retreat during the night, and, taking his course eastward, crossed the Euphrates at Thapsacus. His empty war-chariot and cloak falling into the hands of the Macedonians gave rise to a report of his death, which threw his queen and the captive princesses into agonies of despair. But Alexander hastened to undeceive them, and calmed their agitated minds by repeated assurances of his clemency and protection. He received, a few days after the battle, a deputation from Darius, conceived, as he thought, in a strain of pride unsuitable to the present circumstances of that prince. The Persian demanded that his wife and captive princesses should be immediately restored on payment of a ransom; and declared his resolution to bring into the field an army that should fully repair his late disasters. Alexander replied, that when his antagonist should think proper to throw himself on the mercy of his conqueror, he would then convince him that he needed no bribe to excite him to an act of humanity.

The consequence of the battle of Issus was the submission of all Syria. The city of Damascus, where Darius had deposited a large part of the royal treasures, was betrayed by its governor and given up to Parmenio, who found in it above three hundred of Darius's concubines, and many of the officers of the king's household. The Phœnicians had suffered much oppression under the Persian yoke, and were thus glad to be emancipated from its tyranny. Strato, the king or governor of Sidon, attempted in vain to maintain his province in its allegiance; he was deposed, and Alexander having allowed his favourite Hephæstion to dispose of the crown, he conferred it on Abdolonymus, a man of great worth and virtue, and of illustri-

ous and even royal descent; but whom misfortunes had reduced to seek a subsistence by manual labour.

Alexander had hitherto borne his good fortune with singular and becoming moderation. Happy, says Curtius, had this moderation attended him through life; but prosperity had not yet corrupted his ingenuous mind. *Felix, si hac continentiâ ad ultimum vitæ perseverare potuisset; sed nondum Fortuna se animo ejus infuderat.*

He now directed his course toward Tyre; and desired to be admitted into the city to perform a solemn sacrifice to Hercules. The Tyrians sent him a golden crown, as a token of their respect and amity, but refused his request; declaring their purpose of observing a neutral conduct, and maintaining their liberty, while the fate of the Persian empire was in dependance. This city was of importance to Alexander, as a strongly-fortified station, which gave him free access to the sea from all the neighbouring coast. His pride, too, was piqued, and he determined to make himself master of the place at whatever cost. The city was situated on a small island, about half a mile from the main land. It was fortified by a wall of immense strength, and of one hundred and fifty feet in height, leaving no space between its base and the sea which surrounded it on every side. It was, therefore, unassailable from the quarter of the land, unless by filling up the intermediate distance by a mole or pier, extending from the shore to the foot of the walls. This operation, the more difficult that the water was of considerable depth, was resolutely undertaken by the Macedonians. The labour and the fatigue attendant on its execution were incredible, for they had to do with an enemy, whose spirit and resolution were equal to their own, and who possessed every advantage that the strength and height of their fortifications, as well as a numerous armament of galleys, could give them for annoying the assailants. The works were destroyed almost as soon as reared; nor could the Macedonians ever have succeeded in

their enterprise, had they not collected from all the neighbouring seaports now under their control, a naval force to beat off the Tyrian galleys, and thus protect the operations of the besieging army. By incredible perseverance, the mole was at length completed in the seventh month of the siege: the engines of the Greeks assailed the walls on one side, while the ships-of-war made a vigorous attack on one of the piers of the city in the opposite quarter. A large breach was at length effected, and the Macedonians entered the city, putting all to the sword who opposed them. The detail of this siege by Arrian is one of the most interesting narratives which the writings of the ancients have preserved to us.

Alexander, incensed at the opposition he had met with, and the losses his army had sustained, forgot his usual clemency. He ordered the city to be burnt to the ground; eight thousand of the inhabitants had been put to the sword, in the final assault and entry of the Macedonians; of the prisoners taken with arms in their hands, two thousand were crucified, and the rest, to the amount of thirty thousand, sold as slaves. The conduct of Alexander was yet more inhuman on the taking of Gaza, which immediately followed the capture and demolition of Tyre.* That city was deemed

* It is proper here to mention, that Josephus is the only writer who relates an extraordinary scene between Alexander and the high-priest of the Jews. This historian informs us, that, after the taking of Tyre, the conqueror pursued his course to Jerusalem, which had incurred his resentment from the refusal to furnish supplies to his army during the siege of Tyre. Jaddua, the high-priest of the Jews, arrayed in his pontifical vestments, went forth to meet him in solemn procession. The king, as is said, no sooner beheld this venerable figure, who wore a mitre inscribed on the front with the sacred name of Jehovah, than he prostrated himself at his feet. His courtiers expressing their surprise and even offence at this, which they deemed a degrading conduct in their sovereign, "Do not wonder," said he, "at what you now see; this same venerable man appeared to me at Dium in Macedonia, and

impregnable, from its elevated situation on the summit of a steep hill, and from the great strength of its fortification. It was yet better defended by its garrison, and the intrepidity of its commander, Betis, who resolved to resist the invaders to the last extremity. The military engines employed against Tyre were now planted against the fortifications of Gaza. In a sally from the town, the besieged set fire to the works of the Greeks, and in a desperate conflict, attended with great slaughter on both sides, Alexander himself was dangerously wounded in the shoulder by a heavy dart thrown from a catapult. At length, after repeated assaults, the city was taken by storm, and its brave inhabitants perished almost to a man. The governor, Betis, whose noble defence of his country was worthy of the applause even of an enemy, was dragged round the walls of the city at the wheels of Alexander's chariot. "The king," says Curtius, "gloried that, in this instance, he imitated the example of his progenitor Achilles, in the vengeance he took on the dead body of Hector."

Darius had sent a second embassy to Alexander while he was engaged in the siege of Tyre. The Persian now assumed an humbler tone. He offered ten thousand talents for the ransom of his mother and his queen, and he agreed to give Alexander his daughter Statira in marriage, with all the Asiatic provinces to the westward of the Euphrates for her portion. When these terms were made known to the Macedonian officers, Parmenio could not help remarking, that, were he Alexander, he would not hesitate a moment to accept of them: "And I," replied the king, "might think so too, were I Parmenio."

assured me that the God whom he served would give me the sovereignty of the Persian empire." It is a sufficient confutation of this story to remark that neither Arrian nor any other of the professed historians of Alexander make the smallest mention of it. See *L'Examen Critique des Histoires d'Alexandre.*

The views of Alexander were now directed to the conquest of Egypt. In a council of war which he held after the taking of Tyre, he laid open to his officers the plan of policy which directed his measures, both in the making himself master of the whole coast of Phœnicia and of Egypt—measures which appear at first sight to be deviations from his principal object, the reduction of the Persian empire. He wisely judged that the main obstacle to the accomplishment of this end was the naval force of the Persians and the command they had both of the Phœnician and Egyptian seacoast, along with the isle of Cyprus, whence they could at all times, from a variety of quarters, make attacks upon Greece and Macedonia. Of the allegiance of the Greeks Alexander had no assurance. The Spartans were openly hostile to his sovereignty. In these circumstances, it was obviously his wisest plan to secure, in the first place, the dominion of the sea; when this was once attained, the conquest of Persia, already half achieved, appeared an object which might be accomplished with ease.

In prosecution of these views, Alexander, after leaving a strong garrison in Gaza, directed his course to Egypt. The whole country submitted without opposition. At Memphis, he made a solemn sacrifice to the Egyptian gods, acknowledging their affinity to the deities of Greece; a stroke of wise policy which had a great effect in conciliating the allegiance of the people to their new sovereign. In the same views he planned and founded a great city at the mouth of the Nile, to which he gave his own name; a situation so happily chosen, and with such advantages of nature, that within the space of twenty years Alexandria rose to great wealth and consequence, and has ever since maintained its rank among the first commercial seaports both in ancient and in modern times. Above twenty other cities bearing the name of Alexandria were reared in the course of Alexander's various expeditions. It is such works as these which justly entitle

the Macedonian to the epithet of *Great*. By the cities which he built, by rearing in the midst of deserts those nurseries of population and of industry, he repaired the waste and havoc of his conquests. Without those monuments of his real glory, posterity might have agreed in bestowing on him an epithet synonymous to that by which he is yet known among the bramins of India—*the mighty Murderer*.

The next enterprise of Alexander, although it has furnished opposite constructions, was probably the fruit of the same extended policy which regulated all the designs of this extraordinary man. In a beautiful and fertile spot in the interior of Lybia, surrounded on all sides by immense deserts, stood the temple of Jupiter Ammon, whose oracle had the same authority and fame among the African and Asiatic nations that the temple of Delphos enjoyed in Greece. Alexander had always encouraged a popular superstitious belief, which he found eminently subservient to his schemes of ambition, that he owed his own birth to an intrigue of Jupiter with his mother Olympias. The wiser part of his subjects, no doubt, treated this fiction with the ridicule it deserved; but it seemed an object of moment to give it force and credit with the multitude, and in particular with the barbarous nations against whom his enterprises were directed. Nothing seemed so proper to this end as the voice of the Lybian oracle, the testimony of Jupiter himself, acknowledging the king for his genuine offspring. The difficulties of the enterprise, in conducting a great army through an hundred leagues of sandy desert, weighed nothing in the scale with such an object. He secretly procured every necessary information regarding his route, and even employed guides without the knowledge of his army, that he might appear solely conducted by the aid of heaven to the meritorious and pious object of his journey. Two dragons, according to Ptolemy, or two ravens, as Aristobulus related, were the sole directors of his course. The oracle was prudently instructed

and prepared for his reception, and the enterprise (of course) ended to his wish, in a direct and solemn acknowledgment of his heavenly descent.

Returning from his African expedition, Alexander now traversed Assyria, and, passing the Tigris and Euphrates without opposition, came up with the Persian monarch at the head of seven hundred thousand men, near to the village of Arbela. Before assembling this immense army, Darius had again earnestly solicited peace. He offered to Alexander, along with his daughter, a still greater cession of territory and the sum of ten thousand talents; but the ambition of the Macedonian was unbounded, and he rejected all terms but those of implicit submission. The Macedonian army did not exceed forty thousand men. It was toward the close of day when they came in sight of the prodigious host of the Persians, which extended over an immense plain to the utmost distanec that the eye could reach. Even some of Alexander's bravest officers were appalled with this sight, and Parmenio counselled him as his wisest plan, to attack them in the night, when the inequality of numbers might be the less seen and felt on both sides. But Alexander, with more sagacity conjectured that the Persians would prepare themselves against such an attack, and that it was a better policy to wait till the daybreak, when they would find their enemy exhausted with the fatigue of watching the night under arms, while his own troops, with proper attention to their necessary refreshment, would encounter them with vigour and alacrity.

The issue corresponded with this sagacious foresight. The attack was made at daybreak with an ardour and impetuosity on the part of the Greeks, which, in the first onset, threw the foremost ranks of the Persian army back in confusion upon the main body, and completely restrained and rendered ineffectual its operations. Disorder, once begun, was propagated like an electrical shock through the whole mass, and the decisive victory at Arbela was purchased even

with less effort than had attended the contest at Issus, or that on the banks of the Grancicus. The numbers of the Persians that fell at Arbela are estimated by Arrian at three hundred thousand, while the loss of the Macedonians did not exceed tweve hundred.

Darius now fled from province to province, while the whole country submitted to the conqueror. In this situation, the ill-fated monarch, a fugitive, abandoned by his troops and closely pursued by Alexander, was finally betrayed by Bessus, one of his own satraps. He dismissed a body of Greeks who were his guards, and who, from personal attachment, followed him through all his disasters, lest the preference shown to foreign soldiers might offend his native subjects. In this deserted situation, he was surprised and assassinated by Bessus. Polystratus, a Macedonian, received his last words, which were an expression of gratitude to Alexander for the humane treatment he had bestowed on his mother, his wife, and his children. There is a chasm in the narrative of Quintus Curtius at that passage which relates the death of Darius, and it has been supplied by some one of his editors upon the authority of Plutarch. The inserted passage is singularly beautiful, and altogether worthy of the pen of an ancient classic. It informs us that Polystratus having gone aside to a fountain to quench his thirst, saw hard by a mean wagon, in which lay a wounded man, to appearance in the agonies of death. There was no attendant near. On approaching, he perceived that it was the king of the Persians, who lay stretched upon a skin, covered with wounds. When Polystratus came near, he opened his eyes, and feebly asked of him a draught of water, which when he had received, "Whoever thou art," said he "who hast done me this office of humanity, it is the last of my misfortunes that I can offer thee no return. But Alexander will requite thee for it; and may the gods reward him for that generous compassion, which, though an enemy, he has shown to me and to my un-

fortunate kindred. Take," said he, "this hand as the pledge of my gratitude." So saying, he grasped the hand of Polystratus, and immediately expired.* Such was the end of Darius Codomannus: *Quid hujus conditione inconstantius aut mutabilius, qui nuper inter felices felicissimus, mox inter miseros miserrimus!*† Of this prince it may be truly said that he merited a better fate. The tender and humane affections formed a strong ingredient in his nature. When we consider him stripped of his dominions, his crown and life sacrificed to the insatiable ambition of an unprovoked invader—to forgive was much; but an emotion of gratitude to that enemy, expressed with his latest breath, indicated a generosity of soul which is scarcely to be paralleled.

Alexander was now master of the Persian empire. He passed from Babylon to Susa, and thence to Persepolis. But the immense riches, of which his army now made their spoil, corrupted and relaxed the military discipline. The Macedonians assumed the Asiatic manners; and Alexander himself gave way without restraint to every species of debauchery and intemperance. In the madness of intoxication, he set fire to the royal palace of Persepolis, at the instigation of the courtesan Thais, who boasted that a woman had better avenged the injuries the Persians had done the Greeks than all their generals. Daily instances of the most unbounded vanity, and even of cruelty and ingratitude, disgraced the conqueror of the East. Without those fresh supplies of troops which from time to time arrived from Macedonia, the shameful corruption of manners which pervaded his army could not have failed to animate even those dissolute and indolent

* Q. Curtius, in fine, lib. v. c. 13.

† What example more striking of the mutability of human affairs—that he, who but a short time ago was the happiest of the happy, should suddenly become the most wretched of men!

Asiatics to a recovery of their freedom by exterminating their invaders.

But ambition, the most powerful antidote against the contagion of luxury, was the darling passion of Alexander. Amidst all the enervating pleasures of Persepolis, the Macedonian was meditating new enterprises and more extensive conquests. The son of Jupiter could do nothing less than follow the footsteps of his brothers Hercules and Bacchus. He now projected the conquest of India, firmly persuaded that the gods had decreed him the sovereignty of the whole habitable world. The fame of his victories had preceded him in his course, and he penetrated without much opposition to the banks of the Indus, receiving in his progress the submission of most of the native princes, who deprecated his hostility, and sought to gain his favour by large subsidies and presents. One of these, however, named Porus, a prince of great spirit and magnanimity, disdained to submit to the invader, and maintained a contest for his independence which did equal honour to his personal courage and conduct as a general. Porus encountered the Macedonians with a large and well-disciplined army; but the event was unsuccessful, and in a decisive engagement on the banks of the Hydaspes, the Indians were defeated with the loss of twenty thousand foot and three thousand horse. The captive prince being brought into the presence of his conqueror, Alexander generously praised him for the courage and ability he had displayed, and concluded by asking him in what manner he wished and expected to be treated. "As a king," said Porus. Struck with the magnanimity of this answer, Alexander declared he should not be frustrated of his wishes; for from that moment he should regard him as a sovereign prince, and think himself honoured by his friendship and alliance. As a proof of his amity, he added to the kingdom of Porus some of the adjoining provinces from which he

had expelled the princes who had been his ancient enemies.

The Macedonian, as the monuments of his Indian conquests, built two large cities, to one of which he gave the name of Nicæa, and to the other of Bucephalia; the latter in honour of his famous horse Bucephalus, who died there. He now advanced into the interior of India, passing the rivers Hyphasis and Acesine, eastern branches of the Indus; and his accustomed good fortune constantly attending him, he would have pursued his course to the Eastern ocean, had the spirits of his army kept pace with his ambition. But those barbarous nations, though unable to resist his progress, were not subdued. It was impossible to retain the territory he had overrun; and his troops, foreseeing no end to their labours, positively refused to proceed. With a sensible mortification to his pride, he was forced to return to the Indus, after rearing, as monuments of his conquests, twelve altars upon the eastern banks of the Hyphasis, of enormous height, on which he inscribed his own name, with those of his father Ammon and his brothers Hercules and Apollo. He is said also to have traced a camp in the same place of three times the necessary extent, surrounding it with a strong rampart and fosse: and to have built in it enormous stables for horses, with the mangers of a most extraordinary height. He is, in like manner, said to have caused suits of armour to be buried in the earth of size far exceeding the human proportions, with bedsteads, and all other utensils on a similar gigantic scale; follies which would, indeed, exceed all belief, did they not rest on the authority of authors whose testimony appears hardly liable to suspicion.

Alexander now determined to turn his disappointment to the best avail by exploring the countries washed by the Indus in its course to the ocean. In this view a numerous armament of ships was partly built and partly collected on the different branches of that great river, and the command of it given to Near-

chus, a native of Crete, a man of talents and genius, in whom Alexander found an able and enterprising coadjutor. On board of this fleet the king himself embarked, with a large part of his troops, while the rest followed by land along the course of the river; the fleet and army thus aiding each other's progress. In this expedition, which was of several months' duration, the Greeks encountered considerable opposition from the warlike tribes of Indians through whose territories they forced their way.

Having at length reached the ocean, at the sight of which Alexander is reported to have shed tears, as finding here an impassable limit to his conquests, he directed Nearchus to proceed along the Indian shore to the Persian Gulf, while he determined to march with the army toward Persepolis and Babylon, through the desert plains of Gedrosia, and the more cultivated country of Caramania. Both plans were accomplished. Nearchus, after a voyage of seven months, arrived in the Euphrates, while Alexander, within the same time, amidst incredible fatigues and perils, and with the loss of three fourths of his army, reached the frontier of Persia. On his arrival at Susa, where he was received with the honours due to the sovereign of the empire and the conqueror of the eastern world, he married Statira, the daughter of Darius, and at the same time celebrated the nuptials of eighty of his chief officers with a like number of Persian ladies of distinguished rank, on each of whom he bestowed a suitable dowry. The public joy on occasion of these splendid festivals was increased by the arrival of Nearchus at Susa, the report of his successful expedition, and the detail of those discoveries which were the fruit of his voyage.*

* The journal of Nearchus's voyage, preserved to us by Arrian, and found in his book upon Indian Affairs, from the twentieth to the forty-first chapter inclusively, is a most instructive and curious document. It has been translated and illustrated by an ample and learned commentary by Dr. Vincent. The accounts which we find in Arrian and

We have hitherto contemplated the character of Alexander chiefly in a favourable point of view. It must not, however, be disguised that this character, ingenuous upon the whole, and worthy of admiration, was stained and deformed by extraordinary vices and defects. Of his inordinate vanity we have already seen some striking proofs. Of his sanguinary disposition we have likewise had examples in the barbarous treatment of some of his vanquished enemies; but it remains to be told that, in the unbridled rage and phrensy of his passions, he was guilty of the most shocking cruelty, combined with ingratitude to some of his best friends. Philotas, a worthy favourite of Alexander, the only remaining son of his oldest and ablest general Parmenio, had received some vague information of a treasonable design against the life of Alexander, but delayed to mention it, probably from giving no credit to the informer. On the report reaching his ears from a different quarter, Alexander, who was told at the same time that Philotas had been informed of the design and refused to communicate it, immediately conceived the unworthy suspicion that his silence arose from his own concern in the conspiracy. On no other grounds Philotas was put to the torture, and, in the agony of pain, uttering something that bore the appearance of confessing his offence, which was nothing more than a venial piece of negligence, he was, by the command of Alexander, stoned to death. But this was not enough. The aged Parmenio, whom

in Strabo, of the state of manners and the condition of society in India at the time of Alexander's expedition, correspond with surprising accuracy to the present condition and manners of the native Hindoos. The singular division of the whole mass of the people into *castes*, distinguished by their occupations and modes of life, and separated from each other by impassable barriers, prevailed at that early period as at present; and the progress of science and knowledge in many of the useful and elegant arts gave every presumptive evidence of a state of civilization extending to the most remote antiquity.

the king concluded to be either an accomplice in the crime of his son, or at least to be incapable of ever forgiving his punishment, was, by the same command, assassinated in his tent. Clitus, a general of great ability, and to whom Alexander owed his life in the battle of the Granicus, stood deservedly, on these accounts, in high favour and esteem with his sovereign, who particularly prized the ingenuous simplicity of his manners, and the honest freedom with which he was accustomed to utter his opinions or propose his counsels. Amidst the mirth of a banquet, while the sycophant courtiers, in extolling to the skies the achievements of their prince, were drawing a depreciating comparison between the merits of Philip and of his son, this brave Macedonian had, with honest indignation, reproved their meanness, and warmly supported the fame of his ancient master. Alexander, in a transport of rage, seized a javelin from one of the guards, and hurling it at the breast of Clitus, struck him dead upon the spot. The atrocity of the deed was instantly felt by the king, and, in the agony of remorse, he would have turned the weapon against his own bosom, had not the attendants forcibly prevented him. What can we think of the infamous servility of the attendant courtiers, who, to compose the troubled spirits of their sovereign, could pass a solemn decree that the murder of Clitus was a justifiable action?

Yet, with the most wonderful inconsistency of character, the same man whose vanity and arrogance could prompt to such outrageous and criminal excesses, appears to have been possessed of a moderation of mind that utterly disdained the gross flatteries with which his courtiers continually strove to corrupt him. While sailing down the Hydaspes, Aristobolus, a mean sycophant, who had composed a narration of the king's battles, was reading to him for his amusement the account of the Indian expedition, in which the writer had exaggerated in many circumstances palpably

beyond the truth. Alexander seized the book, and threw it with indignation into the river, telling the author that he merited the same treatment, for having absurdly endeavoured to magnify by fiction those deeds which needed no embellishment to attract the admiration of mankind.

Arrived at Ecbatana, Alexander celebrated his entry into the ancient capital of Media with magnificent games and festivals, in which every refinement of luxury was contrived that could flatter the senses or feed the voluptuous passions. Whole days and nights were consumed in riot and debauchery, in which the meanest soldier vied with his prince in the most unrestrained indulgence. Amidst these tumultuous pleasures, the death of Hephæstion, whom Alexander loved with sincere affection, threw him into a paroxysm of despair. He commanded the physicians who attended him to be put to death; he accused the gods as conspiring with them to deprive him of a life more dear to him than his own; he ordered a public mourning, and that the sacred fires should be extinguished through all Asia; an omen which both his friends and enemies regarded as of the blackest import.

The Chaldean priests of Babylon had appropriated to their own use the riches and revenue of the temple of Belus, which was the ornament of that city, and a great object of superstitious veneration. Alexander had expressed a purpose of reforming this abuse, and the Chaldeans, to avert his design, had published a prediction that his entry into Babylon would be fatal to the conqueror of the East. Alexander probably saw through this artifice and despised it. He entered Babylon in triumph, and was so delighted with the splendour of that great city, that he declared his purpose of making it the capital of his empire. He there received ambassadors from various regions of the earth, congratulating him on his conquests, and soliciting his friendship and alliance: but mark the

force of superstition even in the greatest minds. The Chaldæan prophecy, in spite of reason, depressed his spirits to such a degree as to force him to drown reflection by every species of riot and debauchery. The consequence was an inflammatory fever, which, after a few days' continuance, put an end to his life, in the thirty-third year of his age.

It is not easy to form to ourselves a precise and just idea of the character of Alexander the Great. While some authors have attributed to him the most extensive as well as the soundest plans of policy, there are others who have rated him no higher than as a fortunate madman. Truth is generally to be found between opposite extremes. We cannot, consistently with reason, say, with M. Montesquieu, that that general trusted nothing to chance who, with an army of only thirty-five thousand men, the sum of seventy talents, and a single month's provisions, set out upon the conquest of Asia. Neither can we, with the same author, ascribe it to a sagacious policy that he assumed the Persian garb, imitated the manners of that people, affected all the ostentatious splendour of an Asiatic monarch, and corrupted the simple and virtuous habits of his Macedonian troops by every excess of luxury and debauchery. But if we cannot, in these particulars, join in the encomium bestowed on the profound policy of Alexander, much less can we subscribe to the opinion of the French satirist, that the youth who, at the age of twenty-four, had, in three battles. won the empire of Persia; who was master of Greece, of Asia, and of Egypt; and who, in the course of a few years, built more cities than any other conqueror is recorded to have destroyed, merited no other treatment than to be confined as a madman.* A judgment of this kind may be allowed

* Heureux, si de son tems pour des bonnes raisons,
La Macédoine eut eu des petites maisons. BOILEAU.

Fortunate would it have been, and for good reasons, if, in his time, there had been mad-houses in Macedonia.

to pass in a satire of Boileau, but has no weight in the balance of sober reflection. Guided by a spirit of just criticism in the perusal of the history of this great man, of which we have here exhibited some general outlines, we shall discern the characteristics of a singular genius taking its direction from unbounded ambition: an excellent and ingenuous nature corrupted at length by an unvarying current of success; and a shocking example of the violence of the passions, when eminence of fortune removes all restraint, or flattery stimulates to their uncontrolled indulgence.

The extent of the views of Alexander, and the reach of his genius, may be estimated from those *five* schemes which he had entered in his table-book, as enterprises which he still purposed to accomplish for establishing and securing the empire he had founded. These were, 1. That one thousand ships-of-war should be built in Phœnicia and Cyprus, for the conquest of the Carthaginian empire, and of all the states on the African and European coasts of the Mediterranean sea. 2. That a high road should be made from Egypt along the African coast to the Pillars of Hercules, and garrisons and cities built along it at convenient stations:—a facility of communication between the distant parts of an empire so extended, he judged to be absolutely essential to its preservation. 3. That six magnificent temples should be built in various parts of the empire, to promote an amicable consonance in the great principles of religion, and reliance on the divine government; without which, as a fundamental persuasion, independent of all the various modes of worship, no empire can long exist or flourish. 4. That seaports, harbours, and arsenals, should be constructed in every convenient situation, for the reception and security of the fleets. 5. That all the new cities he had founded should be planted with colonies, and interchanges made by transporting the Asiatics into Europe and Africa, the Europeans and

Africans into Asia. This, which tended to the union and consolidation of all the different parts of his empire, was the main end and centre of all the projects of this extraordinary man. His object, in short, was *universal empire*. Whether that object was practicable or attainable, need not be inquired; it was so in his opinion, and all his designs and measures tended to that end. This object is the key to his whole conduct, and reconciles every apparent anomaly of his character: it accounts for his desire to be held of divine origin, while his mind had no tincture of credulity; for his gentle and conciliating manners opposed to the arrogance of his temper, impatient of control or opposition; for his generosity, clemency, and munificence; for his frantic resentment of everything that tended to mortify his pride; for the assumption of the Eastern dress, and imitation of the Eastern manners, and the studied abolition of all distinctions between his native subjects, and the nations whom he subdued.

Alexander on his death-bed had appointed no successor, but had given his ring to Perdiccas, one of his officers, and his principal favourite after the death of Hephæstion. When his courtiers asked him to whom he wished the empire to devolve upon his death, he replied, "*To the most worthy;*" and he is said to have added, that he foresaw this bequest would prepare for him very extensive funeral rites. He left by Barsine, the widow of Memnon of Rhodes, a son named Hercules; he had a brother, Aridæus, a weak prince, whom he carried along with him in his expeditions; and his queen Roxana, the daughter of Oxyartes, a Bactrian, was pregnant at his death. By Statira, the daughter of Darius Codomannus, he had no children, nor by Parisatis, the daughter of Ochus. His principal officers having held a council upon his death, it was agreed that the crown should be conferred on Aridæus, who took the name of Philip; and it was resolved that the child of Roxana, if a son, should

share the empire with him. She soon after gave birth to a son, who was named Alexander, and whose right was accordingly acknowledged.

This settlement of the empire jointly upon a weak man and an infant was the result of the jealousy of the principal officers, who could not agree upon the choice of any one of themselves, while each thought he had an equal claim with his competitors. Those of the most moderate ambition would have been contented with the sovereignty of some of the provinces; while others aimed at an undivided empire. Among the latter was Perdiccas, who, from the circumstance of receiving the ring of Alexander, was considered as tutor of the princes, and as such had a share of the regency; but this ambitious man interpreted the king's gift as a designation of him for his successor.

His policy was singular; he brought about a division of the whole empire into thirty-three different governments, among the chief officers of Alexander; men of very different measure of abilities, and who he foresaw would be for ever at variance. His aid must, therefore, probably be courted, and he proposed by an artful management to weaken all, and thus reduce them by degrees under his own authority. In this division of the empire, the original monarchy of Macedon, with all the provinces gained by Philip, together with Greece, were allotted to Antipater and Craterus. Paphlagonia and Cappadocia were assigned to Eumenes; Egypt to Ptolemy; and to Antigonus, Phrygia, Lycia, and Pamphylia. Lysimachus had Thrace with the adjacent countries upon the Euxine. To Perdiccas himself, no distinct share of the empire was assigned in government; he contented himself with his influence in the regency and the command of the household troops.

On the history of the successors of Alexander, the Abbé Condillar has made a very just reflection: "We are interested," says he, "in the revolutions of the Grecian states; our admiration is excited by the con-

quests of Alexander; but we can scarcely fix our attention on the history of his successors. Yet a vast theatre is opened to our view—a variety of scenes and multiplied catastrophes. How then does it happen that the history of those transactions is less interesting than the fate of Lacedæmon? It is not the magnitude of an object that renders it truly interesting. A large picture is often displeasing from the very circumstance of its greatness. We lose the connexion of its parts, because the eye cannot take them in at once. Still less will a large picture give us pleasure, if every portion of it presents a different scene or action, each unconnected with the other." Such is the case with the history of the successors of Alexander. The multitude of subordinate governors who share and dismember this vast empire, every one of whom we behold pursuing separate schemes of ambition, throws a confusion upon the whole picture, which it requires the most laborious attention to dissipate; and even when that is accomplished, at the expense of much fatigue and trouble, the end to be gained, either in instruction or pleasure, is not adequate to the cost. In the revolutions of Greece, our views are continually fixed upon the most striking and interesting objects; the development of the human mind, in its advances from rudeness to refinement; the progress of government and legislation; the gradual changes of national manners; the exercise of the noblest passions, the love of country and of ingenuous freedom; the display of eminent virtues and great abilities. But in this motley and confused drama of the dismembered empire of Alexander, there is neither a people nor a country for whom our interest is excited: there is neither a display of talents nor of virtues. At the head of the empire we behold two sovereigns, the one a fool, the other an infant; an unprincipled and ambitious regent with no defined or legal authority; a multitude of inferior governors, each aiming at an extension of his own power by the overthrow of his rivals; and finally, the

consequence of their contentions and intrigues, in the extinction of all the family and kindred of Alexander.

There is, however, one exception to these barbarous and disgusting scenes. Among the numerous governors, Ptolemy, surnamed Soter, a Macedonian, of mean extraction, had Egypt, as we have remarked, for his share of the empire. He owed his elevation to his merit, and had served as a general, under Alexander, from the commencement of the Persian war. While he aimed at independence as a sovereign, he had too much good sense to embroil himself with the disputes of the other governors, but applied himself with earnestness and success to the establishment of his own authority, and the advancement of the happiness of his people. Perdiccas judged that he would find in Ptolemy the chief obstacle to his ambitious views; and he therefore turned his attention first to the reduction of Egypt. In this enterprise he had the authority of the kings, on the plausible pretext, that Ptolemy had revolted from their sovereignty, and made himself an independent monarch. But the attempt was unsuccessful; he found it impracticable to make impression on the Egyptian frontier, which Ptolemy defended with a powerful army; his troops, disgusted with the severe and haughty manner of their leader, and exasperated with their ill success, mutinied, and assassinated him; and transferred their services and allegiance to the governor of Egypt.

Ptolemy, whose reputation was enhanced by the defeat of this enterprise, might now have succeeded to the power and authority of Perdiccas, as regent, under Aridæus and the infant prince; but he wisely declined that dangerous dignity, which could add nothing to his real power; and, on his refusal, it fell to Antipater, the governor of Macedonia. A new division was now made of the empire; and Babylon and Assyria were assigned to Seleucus. But Egypt still remained under Ptolemy, who had established his authority in that quarter upon a solid basis.

Eumenes, the governor of Cappadocia, a man of great merit, and firmly attached to the family of Alexander, was, from those circumstances, regarded with a jealous eye by the rest of his colleagues. Antipater, in the quality of Regent, proclaimed war against him, and he was betrayed and delivered up to Antigonus, the governor of Phrygia and Lydia, who put him to death, and seized upon his states. Antigonus, thus acquiring the command of a great part of the Asiatic provinces, began to aspire to the universal empire of Asia. He attacked and ravaged the dominions of the conterminous governors. Seleucus, the governor of Babylon, unable to make head against him in the field, fled into Egypt, and humbly sought the aid and protection of Ptolemy; who, alarmed at the designs of Antigonus, supported the fugitive with a powerful army, and reinstated him in his government of Babylon.

Seleucus was beloved by his subjects, and the time of his return to Babylon became a common epoch through all the Asiatic nations. It is called the era of the *Seleucidæ*, and is fixed 312 years before the birth of Christ. It is made use of all over the East, by Jews, Christians and Mahometans. The Jews call it the *era of contracts;* because, when subject to the Syro-Macedonian princes, they were obliged to employ it in all contracts and civil deeds. The Arabians term it the *era of the two-horned;* a denomination taken from the coins or medals of Seleucus, in which he is represented with horns, like those of a ram. In the book of the Maccabees, it is called the *era of the kingdom of the Greeks.*

Antigonus, however, persisted in his schemes of ambition. He sent his son, Demetrius, with a fleet against Ptolemy, which was victorious in an engagement with that of the Egyptians. It was on this occasion that Antigonus and Demetrius assumed to themselves the title of kings, in which they were imitated by all the other governors. A league was

now formed against Antigonus and Demetrius, by Ptolemy and Seleucus, in which they were joined by Cassander, the son of Antipater, and Lysimachus; the former governor of Macedonia, and the latter of Thrace. The battle of Ipsus, in Phrygia, decided the contest. Antigonus was killed, Demetrius fled with the shattered remains of his army, and the conquerors made a partition of their dominions. Ptolemy, in addition to Egypt and Libya, had Arabia, Cœlosyria, and Palestine; and Cassander had Macedonia and Greece. The share of Lysimachus was Thrace, Bithynia, and some other provinces beyond the Hellespont. Seleucus had all the rest of Asia, to the river Indus. This last kingdom, the most powerful and splendid of the whole, was called the kingdom of Syria; of which the capital, Antioch, was built by Seleucus, and was the residence of the line of monarchs descended from him.

CHAPTER V.

Flourishing state of Egypt under the Ptolemys—Greece after the death of Alexander—Achaian league—Revolution at Lacedæmon—Ambitious designs of Philip II. of Macedon draw on him the vengeance of the Romans—Their aid solicited by the Ætolians—Macedonia conquered—Greece becomes a Roman province.

We have remarked, that under the first Ptolemy, surnamed Soter, the kingdom of Egypt was extremely flourishing. This prince, a true patriot and wise politician, considered the happiness of his people as the first object of government. A lover himself of the arts and sciences, they attained, during his reign, to a degree of splendour which rivalled their state in the most illuminated days of Greece. It is remarkable that Greece, which owed her first dawning of literature and the arts to the Egyptians, should now con-

tribute to polish and instruct her ancient masters. Ptolemy Soter founded the famous library of Alexandria,* that immense treasury of literature which, in the time of his son Ptolemy Philadelphus,† contained above one hundred thousand volumes. It was still enlarged by the succeeding monarchs of the same race, till it amounted, at length, as Strabo informs us, to seven hundred thousand volumes; a collection quite prodigious when we consider the comparative labour and expense of amassing books before the invention of printing, and since that era. This immense library was burnt to ashes in the war which Julius Cæsar waged with the inhabitants of Alexandria. Adjoining to this was a smaller library, which escaped the conflagration at that time, and which became, in the course of ages, very considerable; but, as if fate had opposed the progress and continuance of Egyptian literature, this second library of Alexandria was burnt, about eight hundred years afterward, when the Saracens took possession of Egypt. The books were taken out by order of the calif Omar, and used, for six months, in supplying the fires of the public baths. "If these books," said Omar, "contain nothing but what is in the Alcoran, they are of no use; if they contain anything not in it, they are of no consequence to salvation; and if anything contrary to it, they are damnable, and ought not to be suffered."

Ptolemy Philadelphus, the son of Soter, inherited the talents and many of the good qualities of his father, though stained with considerable blemishes; it was by the orders of this prince, who wished to understand the laws and the history of the Jews, and enrich his library with a copy of the Books of Moses,

* Ptolemy Soter was, himself, a man of letters, and wrote a history of the wars of Alexander, which was greatly esteemed, but has not come down to posterity.

† He was so named, ironically, for having put two of his brothers to death, from a jealousy of their popularity with his subjects.

that that translation called the *Septuagint*, as being the work of seventy-two interpreters, was made from the Hebrew into Greek.* Egypt continued still to flourish under the succeeding prince, Ptolemy Euergetes, who attained that glorious surname (*the Beneficent*) from his successful promotion of the prosperity and happiness of his people. In the beginning of his reign, he waged war with Antiochus of Syria, for the recovery of part of the Asiatic provinces which be-

* These seventy-two interpreters are said to have been native Jews, six of the most learned men being chosen from each of the twelve tribes, and sent to Egypt by Eleazar, the high-priest, at the request of Ptolemy, who had conciliated his good will by releasing all the Jewish captives in Egypt. This account has been disputed upon no better ground than that a smaller number would have served the purpose as well as the larger.—See Prideaux. For four hundred years the Septuagint translation was held in such esteem by the Jews themselves, that it was read in many of the synagogues of Judea in preference to the original. But when they saw that the Christians esteemed it equally, they then became desirous of exploding its credit; and in the second century, Aquila an apostate Christian, was employed to make a new Greek version, in which he designedly perverted the sense of all the passages most directly applicable to our Saviour. Other translations were likewise made by Symmachus and Theodotion. The original version, by the carelessness of transcribers, also became very erroneous; so that, in the third century, Origen, in the view of forming a correct copy of the Scriptures, published first one edition in four columns, (thence called *Tetrapla*) containing the versions of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, along with the Hebrew text; and afterward a second edition, called Hexapla, in which two other versions, the one found at Nicopolis, the other at Jericho, were added to the former. From a comparison of all these translations, Origen laudably endeavoured to settle the text of a genuine and complete translation of the Scriptures. The best modern edition of the Septuagint is that of Dr. Grabe, published in the beginning of the eighteenth century. The Septuagint translation was in use in the time of our Saviour, and is that out of which most of the citations in the New Testament from the Old are taken. It was likewise the canonical translation used by all the Christian churches from the earliest ages.

longed to his hereditary kingdom; and, being successful in that enterprise, he brought home immense spoils, among which were a great number of paintings and statues, with which he enriched his capital of Alexandria. On returning by Jerusalem, Josephus informs us, that he offered sacrifice in the temple to the God of Israel, in thanksgiving for the victories he had gained over his enemies. It has been supposed that the Jews, to court his favour, showed to him the Prophecies of Daniel, in which his conquests appeared to be predicted. The Alexandrian library owed a great increase of its literary treasures to this prince.

The descendants of the first Ptolemy continued to fill the throne of Egypt for two hundred and ninety-two years. In the three first of these reigns the Egyptians were probably a greater, and certainly a much happier people, than they had ever been in those remote periods which historians have mentioned with poetical exaggeration.

In the preceding brief notices of the monarchies which rose from the ruins of the empire of Alexander, we have anticipated somewhat in the order of time. We must now recall our attention to the affairs of Greece posterior to the death of that monarch; and we shall very shortly trace the outlines of her history, till she becomes a province of the now extended empire; a melancholy period, enlivened by few of those scenes or events which either animate the feelings or engage the imagination.

During the period of the conquests of Alexander, the Grecian republics remained for the most part in a state of torpid inactivity. One feeble effort for their emancipation from the Macedonian yoke was made in Peloponnesus by the Spartans, which was speedily repressed by Antipater, who, in one battle, put an end to all resistance. Some years after, while Alexander was on his expedition to India, Harpalus, whom he had appointed governor of Babylon, having amassed

by tyranny and extortion the immense sum of five thousand talents, apprehensive that the conqueror, on his return, would bring him to a severe reckoning, passed over into Greece, where he employed his money in corrupting the orators of Athens and the chief men of that republic, in the view of establishing an independent power under his own authority and control. But he found, in the incorruptible virtue of Phocion, an insuperable obstacle to his designs. This venerable man acted on the same unshaken principles he had all along maintained; he could not consider Alexander as lawfully the master or sovereign of Greece; but he saw with regret that the era of Grecian liberty had long passed away, along with the virtuous manners of former times, and that a people thoroughly corrupted and degenerate were incapable of recovering their lost freedom, or maintaining it, though gained for a season. He wished, therefore, to preserve at least the peace and tranquillity of his country. But if we judge thus of the politics of Phocion, we cannot impute it for blame to his great rival Demosthenes, that he cherished different views; and that as he had constantly opposed the ambitious designs of Philip, so he persevered in denying the sovereignty of Alexander. The enemies of Demosthenes attempted to bring his integrity under suspicion, by propagating a slanderous report, that he had accepted bribes from Harpalus, and entered into the views of that ambitious and bad man. But this accusation, which gained such credit at the time as to procure the banishment of Demosthenes, has, upon the most scrupulous inquiry, been deemed a calumny. The principal agent of Harpalus being put to the torture, to force a confession of the names of those Athenians who had accepted bribes from that traitor, solemnly acquitted Demosthenes of that dishonourable charge. A single hint from Alexander of his intention to revisit Greece was sufficient to defeat the schemes of Harpalus, and to procure his expulsion from Athens.

On intelligence of Alexander's death, a wonderful change was operated on the public mind in Greece. Liberty was now the universal cry. The people of Athens expressed the most tumultuous joy, and the Ecclesia resounded with the harangues of the orators and shouts of the applauding populace. Demosthenes, though in exile, engaged several of the states to join with the Athenians, and to equip a fleet of two hundred and forty galleys. The Spartans, dispirited by their late defeat by the arms of Antipater, refused to join the league for independence. Phocion, ever prudent and circumspect, advised the confederate states to wait the opportunity of those dissensions which he foresaw must infallibly arise among the different governors. But the counsel of Demosthenes, who proposed an immediate commencement of hostilities, suited better with the ardour of their present feelings. The advice of Phocion was justified by the event. Antipater, after some severe checks from the troops of the confederate states, finally defeated them, and reduced all to submission. In punishment of the offence of Athens, he abolished the democratic government, and established in its room an aristocracy, of which he had the absolute control. He compelled the Athenians to defray the whole expenses of the war; and, finally, demanded that they should deliver up to him Demosthenes. This illustrious man, foreseeing inevitable death, swallowed poison.

Of the tendency of the political counsels of Demosthenes, in contrast with those of Phocion, I have already expressed a general opinion. The principle which prompted the counsels of the former was certainly noble. His views were unquestionably disinterested, for he supported the cause even of decaying and hopeless liberty against successful ambition, and, amidst every attempt to seduce him from his principles, he remained to the last the avowed enemy of the enslavers of his country. The question of preference between his politics and those of Phocion comes to

this short issue: whether was it more advisable for the Greeks, corrupted and degenerate as they were, to submit peaceably to that servitude which they could not avoid, and patiently to bear the yoke which they had not strength to break; or, by continual resistance, to mark, at least, a desire of their ancient freedom—an indignant spirit, which rose against their situation; and thus to give a testimony to their tyrant that, though oppressed, they were not subdued; though compelled to submit, they were not tame and voluntary slaves. The former was, perhaps, the more prudent and the safer part; the latter, without doubt, the more honourable.

The Athenians themselves, after the death of Demosthenes, gave an ample expression of their sense of his patriotic merits, as well as of the generosity of his counsels; for it was their character, as we have seen, oftener to expiate their offences to the dead, than to do justice to the living. They erected a statue in the Prytaneum to his memory, with this inscription:—"*If thy power, O Demosthenes, had been equal to thy wisdom and abilities, the Macedonian Mars had never ruled in Greece.*"*

We have already remarked those dissensions which, after the death of Alexander, arose among the governors of the different provinces, upon the first division of the empire made by Perdiccas. The new partition made by Antipater, on his acquiring the regency, gave rise to fresh disputes, and all were soon in arms and commotion. This was certainly the crisis that the Greeks should have awaited for throwing off the Macedonian yoke; but, too impatient and eager to seize the first opening that promised success to their design, their country became the theatre of war, affected by all the revolutions of the empire, and successively the prey of every ambitious governor whose power hap-

* Ἔιπερ ἴσην ῥώμην γνώμῃ, Δημόσθενες, ἔιχες,
Οὔποτ ἄν Ἑλλήνων ἦρξεν Ἄρης Μακεδών.

pened to predominate. Antipater, in making a new division of the provinces, was actuated by the two-fold view of strengthening his own authority and weakening that of his rivals, whose firm establishment in their governments had elevated them to the rank, and caused the greater part of them to assume the title of *kings*. His policy was therefore judicious, but death put a period to his projects. He bequeathed Macedonia and the government of Greece to Polysperchon, one of Alexander's oldest officers, in preference to his own son Cassander, who, considering this as an act of injustice, prepared to assert his hereditary right by arms. He applied, in that view, to Antigonus, and received from him the aid of a large army, which, under the command of Nicanor, invaded Greece, and attacking the city of Athens, seized the Piræus, and put a garrison into the citadel. Polysperchon, however, retained the Athenians in allegiance to his authority, by promising them the restitution of their democratic government, in place of the aristocracy established by Antipater. The revolution was accomplished; the partisans of the former government were condemned to death, and among these the old and venerable Phocion. Ever a friend to the tranquillity of his country, he had favoured the party of the aristocracy, and had on that account incurred the popular resentment, which was now extreme, against all whom they regarded as enemies to democracy. Phocion, at the age of eighty, was condemned to drink hemlock. The last request he made to his son was, that he should endeavour to forget the injustice and ingratitude which the Athenians had shown to his father.

Meantime Cassander arrived with an army to the aid of Nicanor, and to support his own claims to Macedonia and Greece. Their united forces drove Polysperchon out of Attica, and forced him to retreat to Peloponnesus. Cassander subdued the Athenians, overturned the newly established democracy, and obliged

the party of the nobles to elect one of their own number to preside as a governor under his control. They chose Demetrius Phalerius, a descendant of Conon, and a man of distinguished virtue and ability. Under his administration, which was of ten years' continuance, the Athenians were truly happy. The revenues of the state were increased, the useful arts encouraged, the strictest attention paid to the administration of justice, and to the reformation of all those abuses which had arisen from their late disorders and fluctuations of government. In short, this fickle people might have enjoyed real prosperity, had they possessed a true feeling of their real interests, and known how to value the blessings of peace and good order. But this was not their character; every change was acceptable to the Athenians. They idolized their present governor, Demetrius, and erected three hundred statues to his honour. We shall presently see the emptiness of these testimonies of popular favour.

Under the regency of Polsyperchon, there was an utter extinction of the family of Alexander the Great. His mother, Olympias, had retired into Epirus during the regency of Antipater; but she was invited by Polysperchon to return to Macedonia. Scarcely was she settled there, when her ambition and cruelty projected and accomplished the death of the weak Aridæus, the nominal successor to the empire of his brother Alexander, as well as of his queen Eurydice. By these abominable measures, she took on herself the administration of government, as the guardian of her infant grandson, the son of Alexander by Roxana. She had likewise put to death the brother of Cassander, and some principal men among the Macedonians, who had shown themselves hostile to her designs. On the plausible pretence of avenging those crimes, but in reality to serve his own ambitious ends, Cassander besieged her in the town of Pydna, and, taking the place by assault, Olympias became his prisoner, and was soon after put to death by his orders.

This great bar to his ambition being removed, Cassander kept the young prince and his mother, Roxana, in close confinement in the city of Amphipolis. But the Macedonions expressing their impatience till their native sovereign should assume the reigns of government, Cassander caused both him and his mother to be privately murdered. The people expressed their resentment in murmurs; but such was the power of the usurper, that none dared openly to impeach or question his proceedings. Meantime Polysperchon, whom he had expelled from Macedonia and who now governed in Peloponnesus, sent for Hercules, a younger son of Alexander by Barsine, from Pergamus, declaring his resolution to present him to the Macedonians and cause his title to be acknowledged as their lawful sovereign. This new obstacle was removed by Cassander, who artfully won Polysperchon to his interest by confirming him in the government of Peloponnesus. The main condition of their treaty was, that the young Hercules and his mother should both be put to death.

There were now remaining of the family of Alexander, only two sisters; Cleopatra, the widow of Alexander, king of Epirus; and Thessalonice, the wife of Cassander. Cleopatra, who had for some time resided at Sardis in Lydia, seeing herself treated with little respect by Antigonus, the governor of that province, had betaken herself to Egypt, on the invitation of Ptolemy Soter; but she was brought back by order of Antigonus, and privately put to death. Thessalonice was afterward murdered by one of her own sons, the second Antipater, in revenge for her having favoured the claims of his brother to the succession of his paternal dominions. Thus within the compass of twenty-eight years from the death of Alexander the Great, there remained not one alive of all his family or kindred.

Antigonus, whose extensive projects we have already noticed, was perhaps the most ambitious of all those

governors who shared the empire of Alexander. Not satisfied with almost the whole of the Asiatic provinces, his object was now the sovereignty of Greece; and in that view he sent thither his son Demetrius Poliorcetes, a young man of great talents, and perfectly disposed to co-operate in all his schemes of ambition. With the command of a large army he made an attack on the Athenian territory, seized the Piræus without opposition, expelled the garrison of Demetrius Phalereus, and brought over the populace to his interest, by restoring the democratic constitution. The Athenians, happy as they had been under the government of Phalereus, could not resist the charms of revolution. The three hundred statues, which in proof of their gratitude they had erected to his honour, were thrown down and demolished; he was expelled the territory of the republic, and his rival Poliorcetes hailed the deliverer of Athens. The excellent Phalereus found an asylum at the court of Ptolemy Soter in Egypt.

The life of Demetrius Poliorcetes was a perpetual series of reverses of fortune. During an interval of his absence from Athens, the city was seized by Cassander. Poliorcetes flying to its relief rescued Attica from its invader; and the people, in the fervour of their zeal, proposed, as the highest rank of honour, to lodge their deliverer in the temple of their tutelary goddess, Minerva. After the battle of Ipsus, in which, as we formerly observed, his father Antigonus was killed, this same Poliorcetes, twice hailed the deliverer of Athens, was refused an asylum in that city when he fled thither for protection. When a change of fortune had secured the safety of his paternal dominions in Asia, he determined to avenge himself of the ungrateful Athenians. He landed in Attica with a numerous army, blocked up the harbour at the same time with his fleet, and after a long and vigorous siege, compelled the Athenians to surrender and throw themselves upon his mercy. He forgave them all past

offences, and became once more their idol. Meantime, a league was formed between Lysimachus, Seleucus, and Ptolemy, who divided Asia between them, and Poliorcetes was stripped of all his eastern territories. Thus reduced to the possession only of a few of the cities of Greece, he was on the point of losing even these, when the dissensions between the children of Cassander put him in possession of the crown of Macedonia. He was chosen to mediate in their differences; he found means to rid himself of the competitors, and seized the crown for himself. But destined as it would seem to a perpetual vicissitude of fortune, his new subjects of Macedonia, dissatisfied with the government of a sovereign who had no just claims to their allegiance, rebelled, and deserting his standard threw themselves under the rule of Pyrrhus, king of Epirus. Poliorcetes fled into Asia, where, after a variety of events of little importance to the chain of history, he surrendered himself a prisoner to Seleucus, at whose court, dispirited and careless of life, he abandoned himself to excessive debauchery and soon after died.

Such was the fate of the successors of Alexander, and such the catastrophe of his family; and thus feeble and fluctuating were most of those monarchies which were raised from the ruins of his empire. Great in extent of territory, they had no internal strength, nor any principle of union or durability. It was their lot to be governed by restless, jealous, and ambitious men; the perpetual jarring of whose interests gave them no intervals of tranquillity, nor allowed any attention to the settlement of their kingdoms, or the regulation of their domestic policy. These monarchies were, therefore, subject to perpetual revolutions; but all being alike deficient in that native strength which arises from a long-established government, there was not in any individual power a sufficiency of vigour to overwhelm or subjugate the rest. The general weakness of those kingdoms thus secured them against their incorporation and subjec-

tion to the government of any one of those ambitious rulers; while it paved the way for an easy conquest, and successive reduction of the whole under the yoke of a foreign power.

In that period from the death of Alexander the Great, which we have thus hastily run over, the proper history of the states of Greece presents only a series of unimportant revolutions; frequent and violent transitions from one form of government to another; political changes, not operated as formerly by the internal spirit or genius of the different commonwealths—or by those animated contentions which gave room for the display of the noble and manly passions—but effected at once by the will of a despot on a submissive, spiritless, and corrupted people. Yet, amid this general weakness and degeneracy, there existed in a corner of this country a small people till now scarcely known, who still retained their ancient manners, and who preserved in a considerable degree the ardour of true patriotism and the love of their ancient liberty. These were the states of Achaia.

In those early times when all the cities of Greece, as if by general consent, shook off the yoke of their domestic tyrants, the cities of Achaia, Patræ, Dymæ, Tritæa, Pharæ, Ægium, and some others, had armed for their common liberty, and having deposed or expelled their governors, formed a league of association on a basis or perfect equality. It was agreed that each of the cities should be ruled by its own laws and magistrates; and that all affairs regarding their common interests should be treated in a senate, which should assemble twice in the year at Ægium, to which convention each of the associated states should send their deputies. No treaty could be formed, no alliance made, no war undertaken or peace concluded without the consent of the whole body. Two presidents of the assembly were yearly elected, called strategoi or prætors. It was their duty to summon the states, and in them the authority of the body

was vested during the intervals when it was not assembled. Such was the small but respectable republic of Achaia.

Till the era of the division of Alexander's empire, the Achaians had taken no share in the revolutions of Greece, having no ambition of extending their own territory or power, and no wealth to tempt the ambition of other states. They were enslaved, however, after that era by some of those turbulent governors, and several of their cities were garrisoned by Polysperchon, Demetrius Poliorcetes, Cassander, and Antigonus Gonatas. Others suffered from the usurpation of domestic tyrants, and the ancient association seemed entirely at an end. The following circumstance, however, incited the states to a renewal of their league. The people of Ætolia, a set of lawless freebooters, emboldened by the disorders of Greece, began to make incursions on Peloponnesus. The territories of the Achaian states, lying immediately opposite to them, were most exposed to their ravages. On this occasion Dymæ, Patræ, Pharæ, and Tritæa renewed their league of association on its ancient principles, and they were joined soon after by the Tegæans and some of the other states of Peloponnesus. In one respect they improved on their former constitution, by electing only one president or prætor instead of two, and they were fortunate in choosing for that office a man truly deserving of it.

Aratus of Sicyon, when a youth of twenty years of age, had acquired a high reputation by delivering his native state from a domestic *tyranny*, and joining it to the associated republics. This young man was a singular phenomenon in those days of degeneracy. He possessed uncommon endowments of mind, and a heart which glowed with the love of honour and of his country. He was vigilant, enterprising, and prompt in decision; and he possessed that ready and forcible eloquence which is of the greatest importance to the magistrate of a democracy. Aratus was in the

twenty-eighth year of his age when he was elected prætor of Achaia; and, invested with that honourable office, he formed the patriotic design of delivering Peloponnesus from the yoke of Macedonia. In the first year of his magistracy, he expelled the Macedonia garrison from Corinth; a most important measure, which gave the united states the command of the isthmus and entry to Peloponnesus. The consequence of this success was that the states of Megara, Trærene, and Epidaurus joined the Achaian confederacy.

The republic of Achaia was not fitted to support an offensive war, for two strong reasons. A number of separate, independent republics, however connected by a common interest, cannot always act with a perfect unanimity, and their measures are consequently seldom attended with that celerity of execution on which success so much depends. Moreover, the confederate states were neither populous nor wealthy, and, of course, they could not muster a strong force in the field. Aratus was quite sensible of these defects, and therefore bent his chief attention to the securing his country from attack, and from the necessity of going to war; and this he wisely judged would be best effected by strengthening the league with the accession of some of the more powerful states of Greece.

In that view he made his proposals both to Athens and Lacedæmon: but these commonwealths, though still affecting a passion for liberty, could not, from a despicable pride, brook the thought of owing their freedom to the petty states of Achaia. The situation of the Lacedæmonians at this time was indeed such as to engross all attention to their domestic concerns, as that republic was actually in the very crisis of a revolution.

Agis IV. had succeeded to one branch of the throne of Sparta a short time before Aratus was chosen prætor of the Achaian states. This prince, a better man than a wise politician, had cherished the chimerical

project of restoring the ancient laws of Lycurgus, as conceiving this the only means of rescuing his country from the disorders induced by the universal corruption of its manners. Bnt there is a period when political infirmity has attained such a pitch that recovery is impossible; and Sparta had arrived at that period. The design of Agis, of course, embraced the radical reform of a new division of all the land of the republic—a project sufficient to rouse the indignation and secure the mortal enmity of the whole of the higher class of citizens, and of almost every man of weight and consideration in his country. The plan was therefore to be conducted with the greatest caution and secrecy till sufficiently ripened for execution; but Agis was betrayed by his own confidants. Leonidas, his colleague in the sovereignty, had imbibed a relish for luxury from his Asiatic education at the court of Seleucus, and was thus easily persuaded to take the part of the richer citizens in opposing this violent revolution, which threatened to reduce all ranks of men to a level of equality. The premature discovery of his scheme was fatal to its virtuous author; for the party of his opponents was so formidable, that after compelling Agis to take shelter in the temple of Minerva, they seized the opportunity of his going to the bath, and dragged him to the common prison, where a tribunal of the Ephori, summoned by his colleague Leonidas, sat ready to judge him as a state criminal. He was asked, by whose evil council he had been prompted to disturb the laws and government of his country? "I needed none to prompt me," said the king, "to act as I thought right. My design was to restore your ancient laws, and to govern according to the plan of the excellent Lycurgus; and though I see my death is inevitable, I do not repent of my design." The judges hereupon pronounced sentence of death, and the virtuous Agis was carried forth from their presence and immediately strangled.

This example did not deter Cleomenes, the son of

Leonidas, and his successor in one branch of the sovereignty, from cherishing the same patriotic design which had proved fatal to Agis, and which his own father had so keenly opposed. Cleomenes proposed the twofold object of delivering Sparta from the Macedonian yoke and of restoring the ancient system of Lycurgus. He began by the judicious measure of attaching the army to his interest, securing the confidence and allegiance of all the principal officers, and dexterously removing from command such as he judged to be unfriendly to the revolutionary design. Several of the richer citizens, and even some of the Ephori, from whom he expected opposition, were on various pretences banished or put to death. Trusting to the ready co-operation of the lower orders, he then assembled the people, and detailing the great benefits to be expected from a complete change of system. proclaimed the abolition of all the debts, and beginning by divesting himself of the whole of his property, made a new partition of the lands of the republic, and restored the ancient plan of education, the institution of the public tables, and in a word, as nearly as possible, the long-forgotten regimen of Lycurgus. Cleomenes was hailed the second founder and father of his country, and Greece resounded with his praise, and boundless applause and admiration of the regenerated Lacedæmonians.

This revolution, which in reality was favourable to the great object of the Achaian league, the subversion of the Macedonian influence in Greece, did not, however, meet with that cordial approbation which it ought to have found from the states of Achaia. Instead of being the leaders in the great and patriotic design of vindicating the national liberty, they now feared that Sparta was destined to eclipse their glory by assuming that honourable pre-eminence. Such was the influence of pride and jealousy, that even the virtuous Aratus now affeeted to consider Cleomenes and the Spartans as cherishing views more hostile to

the liberty and independence of the Grecian republics, by elevating the hated power of Lacedæmon, than even the control of the Macedonians. The consequence was that, with a policy which it is not easy to justify upon any principle of disinterested patriotism, Aratus and the Achaians now formed a strict alliance with Macedon to oppose, as they pretended, the ambitious design of the Spartans to be the rulers of Greece.

Antigonus Doson at this time governed Macedonia, in the minority of his nephew Philip, the son of Demetrius. He gladly entered into the designs of Aratus, which he naturally thought were most effectually subservient to the Macedonian interests; and entering Peloponnesus with a large army, attacked the Spartans under Cleomenes, and in one sanguinary battle left above five thousand dead upon the field. Cleomenes, seeing all was lost, fled for shelter to Egypt. Sparta fell into the hands of the conqueror, and its newly-regenerated constitution, with its short-lived freedom, were now annihilated for ever. Antigonus imposed upon the Lacdæmonians an easy yoke. Satisfied with an acknowledgment of their submission to the control of Macedon, he allowed them to model their laws and constitution as they should judge best, and to elect their own magistrates. It may be believed they made no further attempt to revive the system of Lycurgus.

Antigonus died soon after, and was succeeded in the kingdom of Macedon by his nephew Philip, then a youth of seventeen years of age, endowed by nature with excellent talents and many valuable qualities of a sovereign. He was brave, eloquent, and of great address in moulding men to his purposes, which were not always the designs of a man of virtue and probity. Philip owed much to his uncle's care of his education and the early instruction he received in the science of government: he possessed great ambition, and was not scrupulous in the means of indulging it. His object very early appeared to be the dominion of all

Greece; and the want of a bond of union among its states, and their eternal jealousies and quarrels, gave him every advantage. His ambition, however, and a train of success in the beginning of his career, inspired him with a confidence in his own plans, which in the end proved his destruction and the ruin of his own kingdom. After some considerable successes against the Ætolians, which gave him a high character as a general, the important contest at that time carrying on between the Romans and the Carthaginians appeared to offer to Philip, by the medium of a junction with Hannibal, the means not only of subjugating Greece, but of sharing in the spoils of Italy. Seduced by these flattering prospects, Philip concluded a treaty with Hannibal, by which he agreed to furnish a large fleet and army for the conquest of Italy; in return for which service, Hannibal agreed, after subduing the Romans, to invade Epirus and reduce it under the dominion of Macedon. This treaty was carried so far into effect by a large fleet under Philip, which entered the Ionian gulf and seized the seaport of Oricum; but a fatal defeat ensued, and the armament of Philip returned with dishonour and mortification to his own ports.

The period was now come when the Romans first obtained a footing in Greece. This devoted nation was now prepared for slavery, and its destiny could not be averted. Philip, mortified by his late disaster, now bent his whole thoughts on the sovereignty of Greece. He was in league with the Achaian states; but the virtues of Aratus were an insurmountable bar to his ambition; it was therefore necessary that this obstacle should be removed, and the Macedonian was not scrupulous in his choice of means. He procured the death both of Aratus and of his son by poison, and in their extinction the last feeble prop of the Grecian liberty was cut away. Philip had now the command of the Achaian league, and seemed fast advancing to the attainment of his great object; but in

provoking the enmity of the Romans, he had imprudently paved the way for his own destruction. Having renewed his attacks upon the Ætolians, this people, with a very natural but most imprudent policy, courted aid from the Romans, who cheerfully complied with a request which was to avenge their own quarrel and gratify their passion of conquest. They declared themselves protectors of the liberties of Greece, which they were determined to defend against invasion from any other quarter than their own. Flaminius being sent with a large army into that country, defeated Philip in a decisive engagement at Cynoscephalæ, and speedily compelled him to sue for peace upon these humiliating terms, that all the Greek cities, both in Europe and Asia, should be declared free and independent of Macedonia; that every Greek or Roman captive should be set at liberty; that he should surrender to the Romans the whole of his armed ships of war, with the exception of five small vessels, and pay the sum of one thousand talents; and, finally, that his son Demetrius should be given up to the Romans as a hostage for security of the performance of these conditions. Such was the infatuation of the degenerate Greeks, that this treaty, which distinctly proclaimed their subjection to a foreign power much more formidable than Macedonia, and now rapidly advancing to universal dominion, was hailed by them as a new epoch of liberty.

The treaty of Cynoscephalæ in reality put a period to the kingdom of Macedon. Philip sunk into absolute insignificance. Seduced by false information from his younger son Perseus, he caused Demetrius, his elder son, to be put to death. He died himself soon after; and Perseus, defeated in the battle of Pydna by the consul Æmilius, was compelled to surrender himself with all his family into the hands of the victor. Precipitated from the throne, this unhappy prince attended in chains the triumphal chariot of Æmilius, and died a prisoner in Italy. Thus ended

the kingdom of Macedonia, which now became a Roman province, under the government of a proconsul.

The Romans from the period of the conquest of the Macedonian kingdom, made rapid advances to the dominion of all Greece. In this progress, their art was more conspicuous than their virtue. They gained their end by fostering dissensions between the republics; offering themselves as arbiters of differences, which they contrived should always terminate in their own favour, and bringing over by corruption the principal men of the different states to their interest. While they were confessedly the most powerful nation on earth, they employed that species of policy which is excusable only in the weak. A procedure of this kind is not fitted to command the reverence of a generous enemy. The Achaian states held that policy in contempt, and they did not scruple to insult the deputies of imperial Rome. This drew upon them the thunder of the Roman arms. Metellus marched into Greece with his legions, gave them battle and entirely defeated them. Mummius, the consul, terminated the work, and made an easy conquest of the whole of Greece, which from that time became a Roman province under the name of Achaia.

Athens alone had offered no resistance, and therefore could not be said to be as yet subdued. This versatile republic had always flattered the predominant power, and thence had preserved a bastard species of liberty much akin to servitude. The Romans assisted the Athenians in a war against the Acarnanians, but Athens unwisely deprived herself of this alliance by concluding a treaty with an enemy of the Romans, Mithridates, king of Pontus. Aristion was the adviser of this imprudent measure, and Mithridates rewarded his services by raising him to the tyranny of Athens; an elevation which was dearly purchased, for Sylla besieged and took the city of Athens, delivered it for a day to the fury and plunder

of his troops, and put Aristion to death. From that period, the Athenians quietly submitted to the dominion of Rome. They were allowed to retain their form of a democracy, which was now more quietly administered that their liberty was extinct, and there was no object to rouse the passions or inflame the turbulent spirit of the populace.

The Romans treated Greece with more peculiar favour and distinction than any other of the conquered provinces of the empire. The ancient habit of associating with that people the idea of all that in past ages was respectable in virtue or in valour, and more recently the idea of a singular eminence in philosophy, and the culture of the fine arts, had assuredly great weight in maintaining this favourable opinion of a degenerate and fallen people. Low as they had sunk in the scale of true greatness, the Greeks were yet in some respects superior to their conquerors. Rome was arrived at that period when the severer virtues which distinguished the first ages of the commonwealth had yielded to that refinement which arises from, and in its turn cherishes, the cultivation of letters and the taste for the fine arts. In these respects, Greece was to Rome an instructer and a model.

> Græcia capta ferum victorem cepit, et artes
> Intulit agresti Latio.—*Hor. Ep. ad Aug.**

Hence she was still regarded in an honourable point of view by her conquerors—a consideration which leads us, at this period of the termination of the history of Greece, to take a short view of the national character and attainments in those departments of art and science in which the Greeks still continued to make a distinguished figure among the contemporary nations. Previously, however, to these considera-

* "Captive Greece received her fierce conqueror, and carried her arts into Italy yet rude and unrefined."

tions, the preceding sketch of the history of Greece furnishes naturally some political reflections which shall be the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

Political reflections arising from the history of Greece—Retrospective view—Constitutional defects in the leading republics—A rude state of society favourable to patriotism—Greece a strong instance of this—Character of Greece after the Roman conquest.

We have now traced Greece from her origin; from the rude and barbarous periods when she owed even the most necessary arts of life to foreign instructers, through every stage of her progress to the highest rank among the civilized nations of the earth. We have seen the foundation and rise of her independent states; the vigorous perseverance by which they succeeded in shaking off the yoke of intolerable tyranny, and establishing a popular system of government; the alternate differences of these states from petty quarrels, the fruit of ambition and the love of power; while, at the same time, they cordially united their strength and resources to oppose foreign hostilities, when such were formidable enough to threaten their liberties as a nation. We have remarked the domestic disorders which sprang from the abuse of that freedom which these republics enjoyed; and, finally, that general corruption of manners which, tainting all the springs of public virtue, and annihilating patriotism, at length brought this illustrious nation entirely under subjection to a foreign yoke. The revolutions which in this progress the states of Greece underwent, and the situations into which they were thrown by their alternate connexion and differences,

as well as by their wars with foreign powers, were so various, that their history is a school of instruction in politics, as there is scarce a doctrine in that important science which may not find an example or an illustration from their history.

The science of politics, like every other subject of philosophical speculation, admits of a variety of opposite and contradictory opinions—a truth the more to be lamented that of all sciences it is that, where, for the interest of mankind, it were most to be wished that our reasonings should rest upon solid and fixed principles. If, however, there is in reality any criterion of the solidity of abstract principles in political reasoning, it must be when we ascertain their coincidence or disagreement with actual experience in the history of nations. I shall adopt this criterion in laying before my readers a few reflections which naturally arise from the foregoing short delineation of the Grecian history.

The miserable oppression which, according to all accounts of the ancient historians, the states of Greece sustained under their first governors, a set of tyrants, who owed their elevation to violence, and whose rule was subject to no control from existing laws or constitutional restraints, was assuredly a most justifiable motive on the part of the people for emancipating themselves from that state of servitude, and for abolishing entirely that worst of governments—a pure despotism. It is therefore with pleasure we remark, in the early history of this nation, the noble exertion by which those states shook off the yoke of their tyrants, and established for themselves a new system of government on the just and rational basis of an equality of rights and privileges in all the members of the commonwealth. We admit, without scruple, the belief that those new republics were framed by their virtuous legislators in the true spirit of patriotism. But the intentions of the legislator are no test of the actual merits of the institutions

themselves: and it is certain that those boasted republics were very far from exhibiting in practice that perfect system of political freedom which was expected from them in theory. We seek in vain, either in the history of Athens or of Lacedæmon, for the beautiful idea on which speculative writers have exercised their fancy of a well-ordered commonwealth.

In treating formerly of the peculiar constitution of those two great and leading states, we endeavoured to point out such circumstances as appeared to be defects in the constitution of those political fabrics. In the republic of Sparta, Lycurgus, by exterminating luxury, by the equal partition of the lands, and by banishing every motive to the ambition of individuals, certainly laid the foundation of that equality among the citizens of his commonwealth which is essential to the constitution of a perfect republic. Yet, under the Spartan government, there were some circumstances which seem totally adverse to this spirit of equality. It was adverse to equality that there should be any citizen invested with the honours and appendages of royalty. The idea of a king possessing rank without power is an absurdity; and if the law denies it him, it will be his constant endeavour to wrest and arrogate it. The high authority of the Ephori was likewise adverse to the spirit of equality. There was a perpetual contention for superiority of power between those magistrates and the kings; and the people, dividing themselves into parties, bribed to support those opposite and contending interests, furnished a continual source of faction and disorder.

In the Athenian republic the great defect of the constitution seemed to be in this, that it was doubtful where the supreme power was definitely lodged. The senate was, in theory, a wise institution, for it possessed the sole power of convoking the assemblies of the people, and of preparing all business that was to be the subject of discussion in those assemblies. But, on the other hand, this senate being annually elected, its

members were ever under the necessity of courting that people for their votes, and of flattering their prejudices and passions, by adopting and proposing measures which had no other end than to render themselves popular. The guardians nominally of the people's rights, they were themselves the abject slaves of a corrupted populace. The wise purpose of the institution was thus utterly defeated by the single circumstance of the senators being annually elected. There were other radical defects in the constitution of Athens. All the offices of the state were by Solon destined to be filled from the three first classes of the richer citizens. The fourth or inferior class (Thetes,) had however an equal right of suffrage in the public assembly, and being superior in number to all the other three, had it in their power to carry every question against the higher classes. Thus there was a perpetual source of discord inherent in this constitution; the power and pre-eminence of office exclusively vested in one division of the people, which they would jealously maintain by every possible means; while at the same time the other was furnished with arms sufficient to defeat that power altogether, or, at least, to maintain at all times a violent struggle for superiority.

These, which may be esteemed radical defects in the constitution of the two principal republics of Greece, were heightened by several very impolitic laws and customs peculiar to each, which, as I formerly touched on them, I shall not recapitulate. It is sufficient to say, that the detail of the systems of Solon and Lycurgus, such as they are described to us by ancient writers, and the history of those rival republics, both in their quarrels with each other, in their foreign wars, and above all in their intestine factions and disorders, afford full conviction that the form of government which they enjoyed was in itself extremely faulty. The revolutions to which those states, and particularly the former, was subject, plain-

ly prove that their constitutions were not framed for stability, or for any long measure of duration; and the condition of the people (the true criterion of the merit of any political fabric) was, in reality, such as to partake more of actual servitude and oppression than the condition of the subjects of the most despotic monarchies. It is a known fact, that the slaves formed by far the greater part of the inhabitants, both of the Athenian and Lacedæmonian states; and to these, more especially at Lacedæmon, the free citizens behaved with the most inhuman rigour. Neither were the free citizens more inclined to an humane and liberal conduct to those of their own condition; a debtor became *ipso facto* the slave and bondman of his creditor, who might compel him to labour in bondage and fetters at his pleasure. Thus, a great part, even of the free citizens, was actually enslaved to the other; a circumstance which we shall see, under the Roman commonwealth, was the source of the most violent civil commotions. We may judge then with what propriety these can be termed free governments, where abject slavery was the condition of the majority of the people. Nor were the superior classes in the actual enjoyment of a rational liberty and independence. They were perpetually divided into factions, which servilely ranked themselves under the banners of the contending demagogues; and these maintained their influence over their partisans by the most shameful corruption and bribery, of which the means were supplied alone by the plunder of the public money. The whole, therefore, was a regular system of servitude, which left nothing free or ingenuous in the condition of individuals, nor anything that can justly furnish encomium to an unprejudiced advocate for the dignity of human nature.

The history of the states of Greece, indeed, exhibits in its earliest period a very general diffusion of the patriotic spirit, and the love of ingenuous freedom. Those virtuous feelings became gradually corrupted as

the nation advanced in power and splendour. Selfish ambition and the desire of rule in the commonwealth came in place of the thirst for national glory; and at length the enthusiasm for freedom, which was at first the glowing character of the Grecian states, gave place to an enthusiasm of another kind, still of an ingenuous nature, though far less worthy in its aim—an admiration of the fine arts, a passion for the objects of taste, and all those refinements which are the offspring of luxury.

Patriotism always exists in the greatest degree in rude nations, and in an early period of society. Like all other affections and passions, it operates with the greatest force where it meets with the greatest difficulties. It seems to be a virtue which grows from opposition; which subsists in its greatest vigour amid turbulence and dangers; but in a state of ease and safety, as if wanting its appropriate nourishment, it languishes and decays. We must not then wonder at that difference of paternal character which distinguished the Greeks in the early ages of their history, from that by which they were known in their more advanced and more luxurious periods. It is a law of nature to which no experience has ever furnished an exception, that the rising grandeur and opulence of a nation must be balanced by the decline of its heroic virtues. When we find in the latter ages of the Grecian history, and in the declension of the Roman commonwealth and subsequent periods of the empire, no traces of that noble spirit of patriotism which excited our respect and admiration when they were infant and narrow establishments, it is not that the race of men had degenerated, or that the same soil and climate which formerly produced heroes could now only rear abject slaves and luxurious tyrants. Nature is still the same; and man comes the same from the hand of nature; but artificial causes have thrown him into that situation which affords no exercise to passions which once had their amplest scope and operation;

which banishes virtue by diminishing its objects and annihilating its most substantial rewards; for wealth and ease and safety deny all exertion to heroic virtue; and in a society marked by these characteristics, such endowment can neither lead to power, to eminence, nor to fame.

Such was the situation of Greece; when, extending her conquests and importing both the wealth and the manners of foreign nations, she lost with her ancient poverty her ancient virtue. Venality and corruption pervaded every department of her states, and became the spring of all public measures, which, instead of tending to the national welfare, had for their only object the gratification of the selfish passions of individuals. Under these circumstances, it was no wonder that she should become an easy prey to a foreign power, which in fact rather purchased her in the market than subdued her by force of arms.

Yet Greece, thus degenerate and fallen from the proud eminence she once maintained, continued in some respects to hold a distinguished rank among the contemporary nations. Conquered, as she was, she continued in one point of view to preserve a high superiority even over the power which had subdued and enslaved her. Her progress in letters and philosophy, and her unrivalled eminence in the arts, compensated in some degree the loss of her national liberties, and forced even from her conquerors an avowal of her superiority in every department of science and mental energy. The victors did not blush to become the scholars of the vanquished. The most eminent of the Roman orators perfected themselves in their art in the school of Athens. The Greek philosophy had for some ages its disciples in Italy; and from the golden era of the administration of Pericles at Athens, the Greeks furnished the models of all that is excellent in the arts of poetry, painting, sculpture, and architecture.

We proceed, therefore, to take a short survey of

the attainments of the Greeks in those departments of science and of art, beginning with an account of their extraordinary eminence in sculpture, painting, and architecture, in which they arrived at a pitch of perfection which has been the admiration and envy of all succeeding ages.

END OF VOL. I.